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Wardani, Abellia

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The Role of the Market in the Everyday Peacebuilding Processes during the Ambon Conflicts

ABELLIA ANGGI WARDANI

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ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan Tilburg University op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. W.B.H.J. van de Donk, in het openbaar te verdedigen ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties aangewezen commissie in de Portrettenzaal van de Universiteit op dinsdag 24 november 2020 om 16.00 uur

door

Abellia Anggi Wardani

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Indonesië

Promotor:

Prof. dr. H.L. Beck

Copromotor:

Dr. H.G. Siebers

Promotiecommissie:

Dr. G.J.C. van der Borgh

Prof. dr. G.A. van Klinken

Prof. dr. W.E.A. van Beek

Dr. A. Nugteren

Prof. dr. A.P.C. Swanenberg

IT WAS KIND OF SAFE
The Role of the Market in the Everyday Peacebuilding Processes during the Ambon Conflicts

Untuk semua yang menambat dan bernaung di pasar.

For those who chose to rely their lives on the market, and those who found market as shelter.

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This dissertation is a summary of long-overdue observations, (at least) a three-generation legacy, and a tribute to everyone whose heart belongs to the *pasar* (market).

The main theme and theories employed in this dissertation are a bricolage of ideas and concepts that have been stuck in my mind for years. I obtained these ideas consciously through education and training and living my life in a country where we swim among countless impressive cultures, live in a highly diverse population, and draw upon strong local wisdom.

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NOTES ON TRANSLATION

I translated all sources and interview transcripts written in Indonesian language and Ambon dialects myself, sometimes providing additional explanations in [...] brackets to give additional context and socio-cultural background.

Different pronouns were chosen deliberately to convey certain meanings: *I* was used to exemplify my own voice; *we* or sometimes *they* were used to advocate the voices of the people understudied; *we* was used to include myself in the context; *they* was used to set some distance.

Summary

"Trade is the magic that keeps all at peace", Wallace wrote (1869, p. 336). Trade is still the magic that keeps all at peace, this dissertation argues.

This book is about the intertwined relationships between marketplaces and the peacebuilding process.

Early literature on the conflicts in the Maluku Province proposes that the conflicts were divided into three main phases, as argued by most of the scholars in the field. However, the periodization of the conflicts is heavily related to the results of top-down approaches, leaving inevitable gaps in the actual situation at the grassroots level. Tensions between the Muslims and Christians significantly influenced the economic spheres within these communities in Ambon. Many business premises such as shops and markets were destroyed in the course of the conflicts (Adam, 2008b; Duncan, 2014; Pamungkas, 2015). Prior to the conflicts, Christians bought goods from Muslim sellers at Pasar Mardika (Mardika market). When the conflicts erupted, both groups preferred to visit temporary, religiously segregated markets that were located close to their areas. Muslims went to markets located in Ambon Plaza and Batu Merah, whereas Christians went to temporary markets at Batu Meja, Batu Gajah, and Benteng. In some rare cases, there were situational border trade points which allowed traders from

both communities to conduct an exchange of commodities, such as in Nania and Pohon Pule. As the main harbor is located in the Muslim area, food supplies like fish and vegetables were easily available to Muslims (Adam, 2008b; Pamungkas, 2015; Soegijono, 2011). Therefore, Christian communities found it difficult to obtain these commodities at low prices because the Christian traders had to buy them in secret and pay security guards to accompany them for protection (Soegijono, 2011).

The marketplace is considered the core of a society and has attracted researchers as early as Wallace (1869) and Geertz (1963), as well as local and recent studies by Damsar (2018) and Malano, (2011). An attempt to define the marketplace has been a long academic journey as it depends on socio-cultural aspects and context of the society in which the marketplace is located. As general literature on the marketplace tends to focus on its physical form or economic and financial topics, there is an urgent need to unveil its socio-cultural functions. However, little is known about whether the marketplace could be posited in the peacebuilding axis.

Studies on conflict-related in Ambon have not answered the question of how peace occurs in a society and, more importantly, how markets could eventually play a role in the peacebuilding process. This study argues that the best approach to understanding this concept is to bring ethnographic strategy to the field of peace studies, which is strongly rooted in the field of international relations**.** This dissertation employs an ethnographic strategy to incorporate both the emic and etic perspectives in answering the research question. The entry point for this research was a frequent and repetitive claim by the people at the grassroots level: "damai itu (mulai) di pasar", i.e., "peace happened (started) at the market." The discussions allowed me to narrow down the topic and focus on the market's ambivalent roles as well as the undeciphered market self-constituting mechanism in catalyzing tensions in the conflict-prone

society, as well as the idea of market and trade as spatial entities and how they affect society. Furthermore, although the research setting is focused on the development of several physical spaces, the main aim is to follow the shift, development, and impairment of markets and trade points as active and socially functioning spaces in their role in everyday peacebuilding.

The ethnographic approach was chosen to gather all-encompassing data for answering the research question. In line with the nature of qualitative studies, the goal of this research was not to obtain absolute correct accounts related to the market, trade, traders, and everyday peacebuilding but to follow the development of both the issues in line with the timeline of the conflict periods. In the process of approaching the data, I made sure to acknowledge the flaws of each individual and their collective memories in recalling the information, experiences, and moments from the past. To this end, data triangulation of six methods was used for the fieldwork (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1983; Creswell, 2007). The fieldwork comprised of a set of methods to retain all-encompassing data by employing in-depth interviews, participant observations, focus group discussions, field notes, and document collection in Ambon.

A central question guides this dissertation's study is the unsolved puzzle to depict the relationship between the marketplace and peacebuilding: how did the dynamics between the market, trade, and traders influence everyday peacebuilding in Ambon during the conflict period? I situated these affordances in the broad domain of everyday peacebuilding and economies of peace.

My discussion begins by exploring the condition of the people in Ambon prior the 1999 conflicts and then considers the shift within the society during the conflict period. The focus is on the interreligious relationships between the Muslim and Christian communities on an everyday basis in these two periods. The next

part of the analysis explores the intersection between the economic activities and societal conflicts and how the notion of safety in the time of conflict allowed interactions and trust building to take place. Subsequently, I explore these themes in the current/contemporary period and divide the findings into two parts. The first part focuses on the socioeconomic configuration of Muslims and Christians after the conflict abated. In the second part, I focus on the ethno-religious relationship between the two groups at the marketplace in post-conflict Ambonese society.

I argued that integrating the four operational concepts (marketplace, trade, traders, and everyday peacebuilding) with the chronological conflict-related periods that affected the Ambonese community helps refine the study's focus without narrowing it down exclusively to a peace-and-conflict study. Such a combination helps expand the focus to a broader context of managing cultural diversity within a conflict-prone society.

To conclude, this study was aimed at providing a description of the dynamics of marketplaces, trade, and traders in influencing the everyday peacebuilding in Ambon within a conflict-based framework. The complexity and fluidity of these three elements in economic exchanges (market, trade, and traders) to reshape the conflict-affected society of Ambon were examined. In parallel, the roles of economic exchange were embedded not only in the society's spatial dimension but its time dimension as well, which was divided into four conflict-related periods in this dissertation: 1) prior to the conflicts or the *masi aman, sebelum kerusuhan* period, 2) during the conflicts or (*waktu*) *panas-panas* period, 3) transformation period or *su aman-aman* period, and 4) post-conflict period or *su aman* period. I aim to highlight that, first, depending on the conflict period, each element played a different role but also, they influenced one another. Second, several enabling factors were imperative to

allow everyday peacebuilding through economic exchanges to take place.

Based on the descriptions and analyses provided in the empirical chapters, several notable conclusions are presented as follows. This study began with an attempt to define peace in its broadest local sense as well as find where, when, and how peace occurred. This peace lens, as an entry point, is what makes this study differ from the existing pieces of literature on conflict-related topics with Maluku or Ambon as the research setting. Other existing scholarships have paid attention to how and why conflicts broke out or, as the most recent developed theme, why and how the violence ended. However, I argue that by focusing on the violence, the existing studies failed to grasp the idea of peace through the local and organic mechanisms of the conflict-affected society. By viewing the conflict-affected society through a positive lens, this dissertation was able to find "peace" in troubled times.

This study found that peace was subtly achieved throughout the conflict period due to economic exchange interactions, in which is called the transformation the *su aman-aman* period in this dissertation. By disembodying the *su aman-aman* period from conventional narratives on the conflict period, this study has reshaped the common understanding of conflict and pointed out that the society was not constantly under conflict. In doing so, language was shown to be an essential element in the community, having three functions: for performative purposes; to determine the shift in the conflict periods; and as a medium to spread peace messages.

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Glossary and Abbreviations

Adat	: Tradition and customary law
Aman	: Safe, conducive,
Anak negeri	: Children of the land
Baileo	: Traditional house and a meeting hall
Baku bae movement	: Movement to reconcile conflicting parties in Maluku
Baku bae	: An act to be a friend to each other and leave the troubles behind
Famili or Fam	: Kinship based on the family name.
Masohi, badati, and maano	: A form of social-economic cooperation among the people of Maluku
Gandong	: Common ancestry, pact based on genealogical ties
Kelurahan	: Village administration
Kota	: City
Makan patita	: Eating together
Maluku Tengah	: Central Maluku
Maluku	: Moluccas
Mata rumah	: Clan/lineage
Negeri adat	: *Adat* village, village as a traditional unit
Negeri administratif	: Administrative village, village as an administrative unit
Orang dagang	: People who trade (literal meaning), but in this context means migrant
Pela	: Traditional village alliance

Provinsi	: Province
Pulau	: Island
Putra daerah	: Natives
Raja	: King, head of *Negeri adat*
Su	: Derived from the word *sudah* (I), temporal indication
BBM	: Buginese, Butonese, and Makassarese (to refer to migrants coming from Sulawesi island)
FGD	: Focus group discussion
IAIN	: Institut Agama Islam Negeri (Islamic State Institute, Indonesia)
IDP	: Internally Displaced Person
INGO	: International Non-Governmental Organization
Inpres	: Instruksi President (Presidential Instruction)
ITDM	: Institut Tifa Damai Maluku (Moluccan Tifa Institute of Peace, Ambon)
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
Perda	: Peraturan Daerah (district regulation or provincial regulation)
Polri	: Polisi Republik Indonesia (Indonesian National Police)
RMS	: Republik Maluku Selatan (South Moluccan Republic)
TNI	: Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Army)
UKIM	: Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku (Christian University of Maluku)
Unpatti	: Universitas Pattimura (Pattimura University, Ambon)

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This book is about the intertwined relationships between marketplaces and the peacebuilding process. In the period between 1997 and 2003, communal violence between ethno-religious groups was a common occurrence in certain provinces of Indonesia (Van Klinken, 2007; Varshney et al., 2004). This was linked to the economic crises in Indonesia in the late 1990s, which affected the economic, political, and social conditions nationwide and led to the emergence of the Reformation era (Basri, 2018; Duncan, 2014). The combination of these impacts was believed to be the main trigger for various violent conflicts that took place almost simultaneously in West Kalimantan, Aceh, Central Sulawesi, and Maluku (Qurtuby, 2016; Soselisa, 2000; Van Klinken, 2001, 2007). Set against this backdrop, this dissertation considers the conflicts in Maluku Province, with a particular geographical focus on Ambon Island.

Conflict resolution and reconciliation were the government's main concerns during the first years of the Reformation era, and a combination of hard and soft approaches were taken to tackle the communal conflicts (Sholeh, 2013). Debates on the involvement of the military and police in the conflicts and issues related to conflict handling during the period of turmoil have been included

in literature on the Ambon conflicts (recently discussed by Al Qurtuby, 2016; Waileruny, 2010). Early literature on the conflicts in the Maluku Province proposes that the conflicts were divided into three main phases, as argued by most of the scholars in the field. However, the periodization of the conflicts is heavily related to the results of top-down approaches, leaving inevitable gaps in the actual situation at the grassroots level. Peace was not brought about by the elites. Just like how conflicts destroyed the civilians, peace was a halt and an expression of sickness and loathing towards any physical violence among the civilians. One of the soft approaches taken to handle the conflicts in Ambon was the building up of public spaces that enabled interactions between the conflicting communities; this effort included the construction of markets in various areas of Ambon island (Pamungkas, 2015; Pariela, 2008; Soumokil, 2011; Rohman, 2019).

Tensions between the Muslims and Christians significantly influenced the economic spheres within these communities in Ambon. Many business premises such as shops and markets were destroyed in the course of the conflicts (Adam, 2008b; Duncan, 2014; Pamungkas, 2015). Prior to the conflicts, Christians bought goods from Muslim sellers at Pasar Mardika (Mardika market). When the conflicts erupted, both groups preferred to visit temporary, religiously segregated markets that were located close to their areas. Muslims went to markets located in Ambon Plaza and Batu Merah, whereas Christians went to temporary markets at Batu Meja, Batu Gajah, and Benteng. In some rare cases, there were situational border trade points which allowed traders from both communities to conduct an exchange of commodities, such as in Nania and Pohon Pule. As the main harbor is located in the Muslim area, food supplies like fish and vegetables were easily available to Muslims (Adam, 2008b; Pamungkas, 2015; Soegijono, 2011). Therefore, Christian communities found it difficult to obtain

these commodities at low prices because the Christian traders had to buy them in secret and pay security guards to accompany them for protection (Soegijono, 2011).

The marketplace is considered the core of a society and has attracted researchers as early as Wallace (1869) and Geertz (1963), as well as local and recent studies by Damsar (2018) and Malano, (2011). An attempt to define the marketplace has been a long academic journey as it depends on socio-cultural aspects and context of the society in which the marketplace is located. The literature tries to find a link between the marketplace and various aspects of a society, including identity and belief, cultural practices, and socio-economic functions. The importance of the marketplace in the Indonesian society was acknowledged by the government through a nation-wide program. The current president, Joko Widodo, has extensively promoted his marketplace revitalization flagship program, with the aim of revitalizing and building 5000 marketplaces across almost all the provinces of Indonesia since the beginning of his administration in 2014. As general literature on the marketplace tends to focus on its physical form or economic and financial topics, there is an urgent need to unveil its socio-cultural functions. However, little is known about whether the marketplace could be posited in the peacebuilding axis. Therefore, this dissertation focuses on the relationship between marketplaces and peacebuilding during conflict-related periods by considering the conflicts in Ambon.

Conflict-related studies primarily focus on economic and political competitions (Adam, 2013; Gismar, 2000), leaving a research gap in the contextual understanding of ethno-religious conflict. Studies on the ethno-religious conflicts in Indonesia generally emphasize that ethnic or religious identity were not the main causes of the conflict; instead, in the case of Ambon, scholars argue that ethnic and religious identities were mobilized and socially

constructed at the time of intergroup conflicts (Van Klinken, 2007; Spyer, 2002). Other studies predominantly focus on economic and political competitions as the basis of ethnic or religious conflicts (Adam, 2008b; Qurtuby, 2016; Waileruny, 2010). Van Klinken (2007) considers the political competition among the political elites and the prolonged rivalries between Muslims and Christians in the Maluku islands as the main causes of the religious conflict in 1999. In a similar vein, Wilson (2008) also emphasizes the relationship between political forces at the national level and the changes in the political structure during the reformation in 1998 as the triggers of religious conflict between the Christians and Muslims. Furthermore, the battle to impose one identity over other accounts for communal rioting. Brass (1996, p. 23) states, "It is possible to find for many, if not most, individual incidents particular reasons, such as local personal enmities or economic rivalries settled under the cover of chaos." The existing segregated neighborhood in Ambon as well as the fact that the Muslim and Christian populations consisted of balanced demographics allegedly prolonged the conflicts. On the other hand, in the North Maluku province, one religious identity outnumbered the other, and hence conflicts were more easily resolved (Pariela & Soumokil, 2003, as cited in Braeuchler, 2015).

Nevertheless, in the time of the conflicts, spatial segregation was seen as the most effective measure to curb the physical violence between the conflicting parties as it mitigated any possible interactions and contact (Adam, 2008; Pariela, 2008; Soumokil, 2011). However, in the peacebuilding approach, the absence of violence does not guarantee peace. Pamungkas (2015) explores the notion of peace in two cities, Yogyakarta and Ambon, concluding that contact avoidance in addition to the existing latent tensions is what best describes the current Ambonese society. Therefore, the relatively conducive situation in Ambon relies a lot on the fact that communities live within their own in-groups.

However, the above-mentioned studies have not answered the question of how peace occurs in a society and, more importantly, how markets could eventually play a role in the peacebuilding process. This study argues that the best approach to understanding this concept is to bring ethnographic strategy to the field of peace studies, which is strongly rooted in the field of international relations. Therefore, this research aims to continue general critics' conversation on peace and conflict study approaches, which lacks the inclusion of local traditions or less empowering local traditional structures as well as justice among the affected community for understanding peace. In a way, it supports Braeuchler's argument that "anthropological research, methodology, and theories are predestined and called upon to contribute and reveal prospects and problems of traditional justice, flawed concepts of culture and tradition, and misconceptions based on a superficial (ac) knowledge(ment) of the local—something that is so far largely missing in peace studies and interventions" (2015, p. 1).

Previous researches on the Maluku strife have emphasized the role of male actors and have been more interested in the question of "why and how the war began" rather than "why and how the violence ended" (Al Qurtuby, 2014, p. 29) or where and how peace developed. Interest in analyzing the agency of traders as peace actors has recently developed, with a focus on the trader's community within a single ethnic group. For instance, Kadir (2017) studied the gift exchange process and debt in Butonese communities, Soegijono (2016) focused on the Papalele native Ambonese female traders, and Tupamahu (2012) also wrote about the Papalele native Ambonese female traders with information from both the Muslim and Christian sides.

This dissertation employs an ethnographic strategy to incorporate both the emic and etic perspectives in answering the research question. The entry point for this research was a frequent

and repetitive claim by the people at the grassroots level: "damai itu (mulai) di pasar", i.e., "peace happened (started) at the market." I discussed this topic with local academics, especially those who have conducted studies related to it. Through snowball sampling, I managed to interview a diverse range of academics from various institutions, including Universitas Pattimura, Institute for Islamic Studies, and Maluku Indonesia Christian University. This initial stage of accessing the field was crucial to strengthen the quality of the literature review and ensure that the topic has not been studied by local academics and published in local language. Throughout this dissertation, I maintain a balance between internationally accessible literature and locally produced and accessible literature. I believe that my background as an Indonesian and the local literature being published in my native language enabled me to gain extensive access to information through the desk research process. The discussions allowed me to narrow down the topic and focus on the market's ambivalent roles as well as the undeciphered market self-constituting mechanism in catalyzing tensions in the conflict-prone society.

A central question guides this dissertation's study is the unsolved puzzle to depict the relationship between the marketplace and peacebuilding: how did the dynamics between the market, trade, and traders influence everyday peacebuilding in Ambon during the conflict period? I situated these affordances in the broad domain of everyday peacebuilding and economies of peace.

My discussion begins by exploring the condition of the people in Ambon prior the 1999 conflicts and then considers the shift within the society during the conflict period. The focus is on the interreligious relationships between the Muslim and Christian communities on an everyday basis in these two periods. The next part of the analysis explores the intersection between the economic activities and societal conflicts and how the notion of safety in the

time of conflict allowed interactions and trust building to take place. Subsequently, I explore these themes in the current/contemporary period and divide the findings into two parts. The first part focuses on the socioeconomic configuration of Muslims and Christians after the conflict abated. In the second part, I focus on the ethno-religious relationship between the two groups at the marketplace in post-conflict Ambonese society.

Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation comprises of nine chapters. Chapter 1 provides the introduction to the topic discussed in this study and the rationale for the chosen topic. At the end of this chapter, a research question is formulated. Chapter 2 provides the literature review and conceptual frameworks to study markets, trades, and traders in a post-conflict society through the lens of everyday peacebuilding. Chapter 3 describes the historical and geographical context of Ambon and explores *pela gandong* as important local wisdom which binds the various sections of Ambonese society together. This chapter also describes the history of Moluccan sectarian conflicts with a geographical emphasis on the Ambon island. Chapter 4 elucidates the encompassing methodology process comprising of the research design, methods, sample strategy, data collection, data analysis, research quality indicators, and reflections on the methods. In this chapter, I present arguments on the importance of advocating the production of knowledge from less-heard voices in the field of peace studies as well as on topics related to Indonesia. It presents the reality of how the current debates on methodology scarcely pay attention to the positionality of local academics, especially in studying their own culture.

Chapters 5 to 8 present the findings of this study. These four chapters are divided based on the time periods related to the conflicts. This periodization of conflict is a part of the main findings in this

dissertation as it argues that conflict periods are seen differently through the emic perspective. Therefore, terms that originated from the local language are used in these four chapters to describe how people affected by conflicts narrate their experiences. The use of these rather fluid terms also indicates that conflict-related periods should not be seen as a mere sum of years, and the dynamics of the conflicts should not be perceived based on the intensity of violence alone. Chapter 5 presents a historical account on the Ambonese society; the phrase *masih aman, sebelum kerusuhan* (still safe, before the conflict) is frequently used to refer to the period before the conflict, while (*waktu*) *panas-panas* (the heated period - during the conflict) describes the period of high tensions in the society, including the breakout of violence and its aftermath. Chapter 6 explores a new way of viewing conflict from the perspective of people who were directly involved in the conflicts as well as those who remotely experienced the tensions. The word *su aman-aman* (kind of safe) was established among the people in Ambon to not only distinguish the "kind of safe" period of conflict but also indicate the economic activities taking place all over the island. Chapter 7 and 8 explore the more contemporary situation of Ambon; both chapters depict what the Ambonese people refer to as the period of *su aman* (already safe). While this period is understood differently across the island, it is generally marked by the re-integration of Christian traders into the main mixed market and the transit of Christian-owned minibuses through the Muslim areas. Finally, Chapter 9 concludes this dissertation by elaborating the findings related to the main research question that were presented in the previous chapters as well as a discussion section to link the findings with conceptual frameworks.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

"Trade is the magic that keeps all at peace [...]"

(Wallace, 1869, p. 336)

Alfred Russel Wallace was one of the first naturalists and writers to set foot in the culturally rich archipelago that is now called Indonesia. He was mesmerized by the organic mechanism of daily interactions among the people in this widely spread archipelago. It was extensively different from what he had learned and observed in his own culture. He learned a lot from these exotic peoples, who arguably have been exposed to the global trade network, and went back to his homeland in England with a ready-to-publish manuscript titled *The Malay Archipelago* that aimed to introduce this archipelago to the world.

"Trade is the magic that keeps all at peace", Wallace wrote (1869, p. 336). Trade is *still* the magic that keeps all at peace, this dissertation argues.

Based on the above juxtaposed sentences, I draw on some important literatures to discuss and analyze the argument intended to guide this chapter. This dissertation started with a quest to understand the meaning of the common saying "peace started at

the market". However, I do not focus on the positive roles of the market in this study. Instead, I present the sequential transition of the roles of the market along with its internal mechanism during conflict-related periods.

Patricia Spyer (2000) eloquently wrote about the memory of trade among the Aruese people in Dobo, Maluku, the same setting as Wallace's research. Spyer's interest in studying trade was partially inspired by the same sentence about the magic of trade. In her book, Spyer focuses on the ambivalent imaginary identity of the Aruese as they came to be known as "Aru" due to the influence of modernity, and the exposure to global trade associated them with the "Malay." Around the same period, Hans-Dieter Evers and Heiko Schrader (1994) took up a study that focused on the markets and traders in Indonesia. Following Evers' research trail and under his supervision, more Indonesian scholars started to gain an interest in this topic. Damsar (full name) wrote a dissertation on the flea market in Germany (1998), followed by studies on the sociology of economics and markets in Indonesia (2018). Meanwhile, another student of Evers, Nursyirwan Effendi (1999), conducted research on the Minangkabau rural markets in Sumatra Island, attempting to depict the changes within a society due to the impact of the market and its market systems. Effendi (1999) argued that "the initial transformation of social and cultural forms occurs because of the market change" (p. 17).

Long before them, Clifford Geertz (1963) wrote a book titled *Peddlers and Princes*, which was based on his research of two markets—one in Mojokuto, Java, and the other in Tabanan, Bali. With respect to the role of the market and society, Karl Polanyi, in *The Great Transformation,* argued against the principles of economic behavior, stating that "markets and the principle of barter associated with them coexisted with reciprocity, redistribution, and householding" (as quoted in Hann & Hart, 2009, p. 3). Polanyi's thoughts were

heavily influenced by the socio-political economic situation during World War II; he directed the economy towards understanding the relationship between the market and society by arguing that self-regulating markets provide the base to build any society. More recently, Hatib Kadir (2017) conducted research on migrant traders in the Moluccas, a topic similar to this dissertation. However, he was more interested in the debt and gift exchange process among Butonese traders as a means to strengthen the relationships among migrants in the aftermath of the conflicts. Furthermore, Roy Ellen (2003) conducted extensive research on the trade network in eastern Indonesia. These are a few scholars whose works contribute to as well as challenge the main argument of this dissertation. I further elaborate on this topic in the subsequent section.

The above provides an overview of the studies on the first element of this research; i.e., trade, traders, and the market. The second element of this research revolves around studies of peace. The following are a few scholars whose works are directly relevant to this research.

There is a growing number of studies on the economies of peace in other parts of the world (Distler, Stavrevska, &Vogel, 2018; Institute for Economics of Peace, 2018; Nigel, 2009; OECD, 2019; Pugh, 2005), which aim to unveil the potential of economic exchanges for building peace in conflict-affected societies by examining various socio-economic peacebuilding programs. On a more relevant topic, Goodhand (2004) focused on the borderlands of trade routes with regard to the interstate crossings between Afghanistan and its bordering countries.

Before delving into the topic of peace and peacebuilding, I first posit this research through the lens of structural functionalism, which views conflicts in society as social dysfunctions which cause social disorder (Sitepu, 2007). This implies that society should be

seen as an interlinked system, each part correlating and influencing the others; although social integration could never reach its ideal form, the society tends to move towards equilibrium in the face of external changes. Analyzing society's dynamics through this lens implies that tensions and social distortions will not cease to occur, despite causing dysfunctions, but society will automatically adapt to the changes along the way. However, common consensus among a society's members on the society's values is required to foster and accelerate the process (Sitepu, 2007). The common consensus is reflected on the particular codes and programs (Jessop, 2001) available among market actors (both sellers, buyers, and other relevant actors) manifested in the forms of everyday language.

To understand the three interlinked variables of this research which are market, trade, and traders, I present prominent scholarly contributions to the topics of peacebuilding and conflicts. The term transformation in peace and conflict resolution literature was brought into discussion by Lederach (1995) where he argued that conflict transformation requires not only addressing the material issues and interests but it also needs to ensure the change of societal structures and empower individual actors. The goal of such transformation is to positively restore justice, mitigate violence and re-cast relationships once ruined. Meanwhile, Oliver Richmond started his peacebuilding quest by proposing a transformation of peace which aims to criticize the liberal peace (2006), which, according to him, failed to bring peace to the grassroots level of society (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013). In an attempt to answer the critics of top-down approaches to peacebuilding, Richmond and Mitchell (2012) and Mac Ginty (2014) proposed the idea of everyday peacebuilding. This approach specifically analyzes how segregated communities mend their broken social fabric through organic mechanisms.

In the case of Ambon island, these organic mechanisms arguably took place in rather neutral zones such as schools, hospitals, marketplaces, etc. (Soumokil, 2011). The marketplaces became the dominant spaces to enact grassroot-level reconciliation (Soegijono, 2011; cf. Pariela, 2008), and female traders played important roles in disseminating peace messages while conducting economic exchange and trading (Soegijono, 2011). However, Kadir (2017) and Braeuchler (2015) saw the roles of the marketplace as ambivalent. They argued that the marketplace does not necessarily support peacebuilding or allow the sustaining of peace due to its nature as a competitive space that's prone to conflicts. The debates on the roles of the market, trade, and traders in the framework of peacebuilding have not produced satisfactory answers to date. The wide range of actors embedded in these three elements make it challenging for researchers to grasp the emerging patterns related to the topic. However, I argue that the dimensions of time, space, and language are the missing links in these debates and need to be incorporated to analyze the roles of the market, trade, and traders in conflict-prone societies.

The following section of this literature review is divided into two parts: First, I explore the dynamics of the three focal elements of this research—the market, trade, and traders. Second, I provide examples of current debates on everyday peacebuilding.

2.1 The market, trade, and traders

Studies on the relationship between space and communal violence have gained increasing attention in both geography discipline as well as peacebuilding scholarships (Endres, 2013; Sujarwoto, 2017). The analysis of space-making in this dissertation will emphasize the marketplace as a (social) space embedded in the backdrop of conflict-prone scenarios. A set of anthropological researches on the

socio-cultural approach towards traditional markets among peasants in Indonesia was first introduced by Clifford Geertz (1956, 1963, 1978) through his series of publications on the topic of Java island's *bazaar economy,* in relation to the religious values and identities of the region. In 1984, Hans-Dieter Evers took on a similar research subject. He supervised a research program to explain "why certain ethnic groups succeeded in monopolizing economic positions, and to examine what role their social organization, their value patterns and their religious persuasions played in fostering their economic success and hindering their assimilation into their host societies" (Evers & Schrader, 1994, p. xiii).

What kind of social arrangements does the marketplace provide to the society? Evers and Schrader's aforementioned questions demand an explanation of the tendency of minorities/ marginalized people and women to be engaged in trading and informal economic sectors. Here, we have two paired groups at stake: minority–majority and men–women. To partly answer the questions, we look at Siebers' (1999) research in the Q'eqchi' region of Guatemala, where he examined the gender role division of men and women in relation to the market-oriented activities and production in rural areas. His findings suggested that the women's involvement in market-oriented activities were relatively high in some parts of the region, while the men's roles were to "till the land, grow the main food (maize) and cash crops (cardamom and coffee), take care of the larger animals, sell cash crops and animals, work for wages and carry out most of the commercial activities" (p. 127). In a similar vein, if we consider both marketplace *and* people as infrastructure, the intersection between the minorities and marginalized communities may facilitate greater economic collaboration and expanded spaces despite their limited means when compared to the majority groups (Simone, 2004). Such a

premise became apparent during the conflict periods, as elaborated on further below.

The following are some studies related to the roles of the marketplaces in extensively explored societies across the globe. Endre Sik (1999), a Hungarian sociologist, studied the open-air markets (OAMs) in East-Central Europe to understand the transformation processes in eastern and central Europe in the post-communist period. His research revealed that OAMs allow different activities to be carried out by men and women, both as consumers and traders, while disregarding ethnic group identity differences to enable the emergence of new social stratification systems. He concluded that open-air markets are socially embedded despite being economic institutions. In 2014, the commercial exchanges at the Lufu market in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) contributed not only to mediating tensions among the conflicting community members but also to the political economic landscape of Kinshasa (the capital of the DRC) (Layinga, 2017).

Similar to the case of the DRC, Goodhand (2013) conducted extensive research on the marketplaces in post-conflict Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. He focused on war-to-peace transitions, covering the shift from a war economy to a peace economy, borderlands market, and the relationship between social capital and the political economy of violence. In one of his studies, Goodhand (2004) mapped out the transition from a war economy to a peace economy with different actors and types of (commercial) activities, which yielded different impacts on the peacebuilding process in Afghanistan. A similar socio-political background was present in Kirsten Endres and Ann Marie Leshkowich's (2018) work on the marketplace in post-socialism Vietnam. They described the interdependency between the marketplace, trade, and traders as follows: "What those markets actually are, physically and conceptually, are every bit as much the product of her (a female trader) daily actions and the

subjectivity that informs them. Trade and traders co-constitute each other" (p. ix).

I now narrow down the focus of the literature review to understand the marketplace, trade and traders. In many studies, I found that the definitions of the three elements were intertwined and self-explanatory and tended to be more pragmatic than theoretical; further, they were greatly influenced by the socio-economic and cultural background of the society where the markets were located. Minot et al. (2015) defined the marketplace as "a large number of vendors can set up shop at tables or in stalls under a common roof […] Semi-permanent stands are vendors who sell from a table, stand, cart, or stall that can be moved but often stays in one place during the day. They often sell fresh fruits and vegetables" (p. 377). To distinguish between the traditional marketplace and the traditional trading system, I refer to Mai and Buchholt's (1987) research on the rural market in Minahasa, Sulawesi Island, Indonesia. They defined the marketplace as a destined place "for circulating goods outside the traditional system of reciprocity and redistribution. […] marketplace comes to be a central village institution which not only serves the trading function but also has social and cultural purposes" (p. 1). In a similar vein, the marketplace may refer to an open-air or covered area that houses rows of small retailers (Reardon & Berdegué, 2002). In addition, Damsar (2018) defined the marketplace as *"pertemuan antara penjual dan pembeli yang diarahkan oleh permintaan dan penawaran dalam proses, ruang dan waktu"* or a meeting between sellers and buyers that's driven by supply and demand tied together in the process, space and time. I agree with Damsar that space and time are crucial elements that need to be emphasized in the process of understanding marketplaces.

Apart from the issues of human interactions or economic exchanges carried out in the marketplace, it is also important to examine the idea of the market in its physical and abstract sense. To

this end, I try to posit the market through Michel de Certeau's (1984) notion of space and place. A place (or *un lieu* in French), according to de Certeau, is "an instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability" (p. 117). On the other hand, a space comprises of a range of factors such as velocities, time variables, and vectors of direction; i.e., mobile elements, not a fixed notion, interact with one another. Therefore, de Certeau argues that space "occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities" (p. 117). To understand the relationship between space and place, de Certeau argues that "space is a practiced place."

In parallel, a body of literature in urban planning suggests that while space influences its dwellers, space is also shaped by the dynamics of human interactions within it. Lefebvre (1991) states that "(social) space is a (social) product" (p. 26). From these definitions of place and space, I argue that the market can be both a place and space, but to understand which function it serves requires examining the time dimension and societal context. Incorporating the definitions of both Lefebvre and de Certeau, this dissertation considers the marketplace as a socio-cultural and economic space produced through interactions among social actors in a given physical place, which aims to accommodate the needs of the actors. It highlights the nature of the trading point as the trade *space,* but as soon as the spatial stories (de Certeau, 1984) are embedded to it, the trade *space* becomes the market *place*. In this sense, spatial stories play a role in transforming places into spaces or spaces into places and allow dialectical relationships to form between places and spaces (de Certeau, 1984).

As briefly mentioned earlier in this chapter, this dissertation uses the concept of trade along with attempts to depict the emergence of peace economies at the borderline; I purposely use

the term borderline instead of borderlands to fit in the local context of Ambon. Walton and Polski (2018) characterized borderlands as a common "home to ethnic, linguistic and kinship groups that straddle the border, facilitating flows of trade and movements of people" (p. 6). They further argued that borderlands can be contested spaces where violence persists and sharp economic inequalities are present. However, they also highlighted the positive condition of borderlands as being areas where new modes of development, extraction, and trade emerge and are fostered. To differentiate between the inter-state notions of borderlands, I use the term borderline to depict the areas separating two claimed territories which accommodate economic exchanges in religiously segregated societies. A borderline relies on the spatial stories of the two separated spaces; it does not necessarily divide two places based on their administrative statuses. It is perceived as a border because communities draw their own, sometimes imaginary, line between the places by constructing experience-based narratives for each area.

When we consider the concept of trade in the framework of the marketplace, networking—in its broadest sense, as the main material to cement relationships at the market—remains an important social or institutional aspect of markets. However, the notion of relationship, regardless of its nature, often causes traders to face a serious dilemma: "Should they succumb to the moral obligations of sharing and caring for relatives, neighbors or members of ones own ethnic group or should one follow the logic of profit maximization and capital accumulation" (Evers & Gerke, 2007, p. 17). Advancing the logic of profit allows traders to expand their trade and lift up subsistence production to market relations. Similarly, the economic exchanges through trade at the marketplace is performed through its own mechanism, involving not only economy-based profit and loss calculations but also social capital

accumulation. The notion of social capital, especially in terms of the accumulation of network contacts and existing relationships before conflicts erupted, arguably allowed communities to reconcile through trade and rebuild relationships and trust (Pariela, 2008).

2.2 Everyday peacebuilding

In the introduction chapter, I briefly discussed the growing attention on advancing peace studies by inviting perspectives from different disciplines and collaborations among them. I also highlighted that such an attempt requires developing and adjusting the methodological and theoretical frameworks to address the issues of peace and conflict from different, if not better, angles.

Why does conflict happen? Jonathan Goodhand (1999) argued that conflict is a struggle. It involves individuals or collectivities fighting over values or claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the conflicting parties aim to assert their values or claims over those of the others. Contemporary conflicts have shifted from a set of wars with clear beginnings and ends to "a broader process of social change which is turbulent, discontinuous and the result of combinations of contingent factors" (Goodhand, 1999, p. 23). To this view, Braeuchler (2015) added that the post-Cold War era marked the growing use of culture as a "resource for conflict transformation and sustainable peace" (p. 12), in accordance with the failure of internationalist paradigm and normative approaches, which weigh on political and legal measures. In the context of Indonesia, Gerry van Klinken (2005) used five processes in the dynamics of contention to analyze the ethnic conflicts in five provinces of Indonesia. In West Kalimantan, he focused on examining the role of identity formation among Malays and Dayaks. In Central Sulawesi, Poso, he explored the shift of conflict scale from local neighborhood riots into an international

issue when he included Laskar Jihad – the Java-based paramilitary. In North Maluku, he identified the process of polarization, where elites competed to take most advantages of the newly proliferated province. In Central Kalimantan, he examined the process of actor making of the Dayaks during the conflict in the region. While in Ambon, Maluku province, van Klinken identified the tendency of mass mobilization in the name of religion. Although the five conflicts were considered to be ethnic conflicts, they showcased different causes and escalated through different mediums. Among the five episodic conflicts, I focus on van Klinken's (2007) analysis of the conflicts in Ambon using the framework of mobilization. He argued that the local elites used ethnic religious issues to mobilize voters on the eve of the first democratic election in 1999. Al Qurtuby (2016) also proposed a similar argument to his findings, stating that locally based actors were heavily involved in the conflict dynamics.

However, more contemporary studies on the issues of ethnic conflict in Indonesia have branched out to various other subjects, thereby failing to answer the basic question of why conflict broke out and how peace was built. Al Qurtuby (2016) argued that the weak evidence on the involvement of military and central government in the conflict escalation, where he emphasized that locally based actors were also active agents during conflicts. It challenged the common beliefs among the Ambonese society proposing that the conflicts were heavily orchestrated by Jakarta-based military and civilian elites. Narratives depicting Maluku's people as the victims of conflict received better approval in the society. Based on survey findings with 100 ex-militias and various actors, Al Qurtuby (2016) strongly argued that of the various elements related to religion, such as the institution and networks, actors played stronger roles in triggering and sustaining conflict than the political actors did.

On the other hand, Jana Krause (2018) claimed that the non-violence approach, although it could not prevent violence altogether, could reduce the number of casualties during the time of the conflicts. Krause's research aimed to compare the cases of Wayame in Ambon and Jos in Nigeria. Her findings suggested that the religious and community leaders played important roles in strengthening the resilience within the community. Krause followed van Klinken's mobilization framework approach to analyze the escalation of conflicts in Ambon from fights between thugs and gangs to communal wars. Furthermore, Krause also analyzed the development of social resilience in vulnerable communities and argued that non-violence could not be separated from the community's act of prevention. She elaborated on three different social processes from which non-escalation and non-violence were produced. First, they were related to "the depolarization of inter-group relations and rejection of narratives of a 'religious conflict'" (p. 247). Second, the role of leaders in non-violent communities in persuading residents to prevent tensions and/or initiate attacks. Third, apart from internal persuasion towards the residents, leaders were also actively engaged with external gangs and militias to negotiate neutrality and impartiality of their areas during the conflict. She further analyzed her findings through the lens of resilience, arguing that the situations in both Ambon and Jos showed not only the strength of the vulnerable communities but also "adaptation for mitigating vulnerability" (p. 254). Through their books, Al Qurtuby and Krause successfully tackled the questions of how violence was abated. However, they did not articulate the question of how peace occurred in the first place. For this reason, this dissertation focuses on the question of where and how peace happened.

Peace is often juxtaposed with situations with an absence of physical violence after the end of a war. However, this definition does not cover the structural violence (Galtung, 1971), which sharpens

the societal gap in terms of equity and equality among the society members. The absence of violence in a society does not guarantee peace; it can also be seen as negative peace. Negative peace is when stability is achieved in a society through the absence of violence and war, but the society is still charged with injustice, inequity, and other social and personal dissatisfactions (Webel, 2007). Positive peace occurs when transformation takes place within the society, allowing a cross-cutting factor for progress that aims to make it easier for businesses to sell, and is "intimately connected to the analysis and practice of social and economic development" (Galtung, 2007; Goodhand, 1999, p. 15). The concept of positive peace appears as a critique of the dominant North American paradigm in peace studies, wherein peace is sought only through political mechanisms, and creating a more stable (post-conflict) society and achieving sustainable peace is undermined. While this dissertation tries to amplify the cultural dimension of peacebuilding, in accordance with Braeuchler's (2015) argument, it does not necessarily counter political reconciliation or intend to argue that cultural reconciliation is the only method of achieving sustainable peace. The triggers of violence could take up different forms, with social and economic causal factors being supported by the spatial population structure—where spatial heterogeneity is believed to be conflict-prone in nature. Meanwhile, peace is not necessarily the absence of armed violence; a society needs to achieve sustainable peace, or at least positive peace, to mitigate potential violent conflicts in the future.

To depict the everyday realities of conflict-affected societies, I believe it is necessary to discuss a rather new approach to perceiving peace—everyday peace. Everyday practices are defined as ways of operating and are sometimes seen as an obscure background to more diachronic events in society (de Certeau, 1984). Mac Ginty (2014) argued that everyday peace constitutes "the routinized practices used by individuals and collectives as they navigate their

way through life in a deeply divided society that may suffer from ethnic or religious cleavages and be prone to episodic direct violence in addition to chronic or structural violence" (p. 549). Furthermore, Mac Ginty stated that everyday peacebuilding relates to the idea of peace formation (cf. Richmond, 2013) which "includes a series of 'micro-solidarities', as individuals and small groups engage in cooperation and accommodation" (Mac Ginty, 2014, p. 560). Referring back to the main argument of this dissertation, I argue that unveiling how marketplace, trade, and traders play roles in shifting conflict-affected societies can be best achieved by tracing and analyzing the forms of everyday peace in the societies.

With regard to the connection between the marketplace and peacebuilding, Watson (2008) wrote about the magic of the marketplace in fostering social connections and interaction. Her research took place in urban areas in the United Kingdom where public spaces have declined significantly. She argued that traders are the "social glue" that allows the organic social inclusion mechanism to function. These social processes at the market, as analyzed by Watson, form the basic foundation for peaceful society. They enable tore-strengthen social cohesion. Nevertheless, there are also debates among scholars on the positive roles of the marketplace in the peacebuilding process. Lund (in Lund & McDonald , 2015) stated his skepticism towards the emphasis on individuals and social-psychological phenomena such as the interethnic commercial and physical contact at the marketplace. Although such interactions do suggest positive changes in the interpersonal relations, they have not been proved to scale up at the collective relationship level as a method of conflict resolution. Furthermore, Lund (2015) argues, "studies of the 'ethnic contact thesis' show that individuals may indeed adopt more positive attitudes towards other individuals from an opposed group with whom they meet and perhaps even transact business. However, those changes do not necessarily carry

over to what those individuals do when participating in larger political activities that involve competing interests among differing groups, such as voting in elections" (p. 27).

In a similar vein, Kadir (2017) stated that markets in a conflict-affected society do not have what it takes to support peacebuilding. What traders and buyers perform at the marketplace is not and cannot be a foundation for a solid interaction or long-term positive effects; rather it showcases a form of correspondence, as per the argument of Tim Ingold (Gatt & Ingold, 2013). Kadir argued that the product of this said interaction depends on various hidden motives, distrust, and trickery, which cannot be seen as elements of a peaceful society. Based on his findings in rural and urban areas, he argued that identity has at least two different forms; on one hand, it is solidified, but on the other, it can be messy and fluid. His research also focused on the analysis on solidification of ethnic identity while emphasizing on the meaning behind gift exchange and debt. I take Kadir's argument as the foundation for understanding the ambivalent roles of the market and how to position Butonese migrants in the power contestation at the marketplace. Throughout this dissertation, I argue that in defining the correspondence among traders at the market, Kadir (2017) paid little attention to analyzing the language used by the actors and how it could serve as an important element for extending local peace codes which could transform a correspondence into meaningful interactions and discourse.

As this dissertation tries to depict the crosscutting roles between market and languages, I agree with Hann and Hart's (2009) statement that markets "broke up the insularity of traditional rural society and brought humanity into wider circles of discourse and interaction" (p. 3). However, in times of conflict, social and security constraints become another obstacle for interactions as well as building narratives. As interest in analyzing peace and conflict

issues through the lens of language studies started to flourish, emphasis was placed on the acts of speech and narratives of conflict and peace. De Matos (2006) wrote about the importance of understanding the interrelationships between language, peace, and conflict resolution. However, there are limited studies on peace and conflict studies that touch upon this specific topic.

De Saussure (1916 [2000]) defined language as a "social fact," a notion that is often left behind since language is embedded in every aspect of society and holds a broad and fluid position. Therefore, to understand the social fact of Ambonese society, I analyze the use of terms and words to depict certain locally produced knowledge and codes related to the conflict situation. To do so, I refer to van Minde's (1997) comprehensive works on Malayu Ambon—the Ambonese dialect of the Malay language. According to Van Minde and Tjia (2002), "[…] grammatical categories from European languages (such as tense, aspect, person, number) cannot be coded in the Malay verb" (p. 284). Therefore, it is imperative to know the position of tenses in the Indonesian/Ambonese Malay language. As the same authors stated, "tense is not a grammatical category of the Malay verb, and situations may be described without any temporal marking whatsoever. Indonesian sentence lacks any explicit temporal coding, whereas in English the choice between present and past tense is obligatory" (p. 291). Therefore, an understanding of the context is indispensable to reach the right temporal interpretation of English and Malay sentences (p. 292). This dissertation later focuses on the temporal aspect of language and how it reveals the social codes widely used by the community to better navigate times of conflict to the extent that the codes marked conflict periodization at the grassroots level.

Chapter 3

Ambon Context

3.1 Introduction

Researchers' interest in studying marketplaces through the lens of economic anthropology has rapidly increased over the last three decades, trying to unveil not only the economic exchanges but also the social and cultural exchanges that take place at the marketplace. The outbreak of conflicts, for instance, forced the Indonesian society to reconfigure its market system. Meanwhile, small-scale trade allowed for survival in the time of crisis, and it was also the main source of income generation.

Home to thousands of marketplaces, Indonesia has been working on negotiating the most suitable policies and regulations to accommodate the interest of various market actors in a balanced way. Since the beginning of his administration in 2014, the current president Joko Widodo has extensively promoted marketplace revitalization as one of his flagship programs, aiming to revitalize as well as build 5000 marketplaces spread out in almost all the Indonesian provinces. Citing the president's speech, Liputan 6 (2019) reported that the Ministry of Trade revitalized 4.211 marketplaces between 2015 and 2019, with 1037 more marketplaces to be built or renovated. In 2020, the central government and the local government of Ambon City plan to revitalize the Mardika market, remaking it into a completely new and modern building.

Such a physical change in the Mardika market will inevitably reshape the human interactions that have bound the market actors together throughout various challenges in society, especially while overcoming the aftermath of communal violence.

This chapter serves to provide geographical context and historical background for the research setting. It is divided into two parts. First, the geographical context of the research setting is provided, which is later referred to as Ambon Island or the Ambonese people. Second, the historical background of Ambon, including the historical accounts of communal violence that occurred on the island, is explained. In the second part, I also describe a cultural tradition called the *pela-gandong* intervillage alliance, which played a significant role in the peacebuilding process.

3.2 The Research Setting

This research focuses on Ambon Island and several neighboring islands such as Haruku and Saparua. While explaining this geographical context, I take into consideration the administrative statuses of the regions but do not divide the research setting according to such division, it is more of a cross-border research setting. This has, of course, further implications for the coverage of this research. For example, Ambon Island consists of two separate administrative areas: Ambon City and Central Maluku Regency. The Central Maluku regency covers a large part of Ambon, including the two aforementioned islands, Haruku and Saparua, as well as a small part of Seram Island where the capital of the regency is located. The choice of this cross-border research setting stems from the nature of trade in the region; it enables trade among actors from various geographical backgrounds. Instead of defining people by the administrative aspects, I follow their trade logic and patterns. The setting of this research is centered around

one business area along the coastline of Ambon City, where it is home to at least three big markets: Mardika market, Batu Merah market, and Arumbae fish market.

When referring to the Ambon Island, I distinguish between the two administrative areas. In a similar vein, the Ambonese people refer to each island's community as the Haruku, Saparua, and Nusa Laut people. Meanwhile, the term native Ambonese is used in this dissertation to characterize the people who perceive themselves as the natives of the region and or possess the *pela-gandong* intervillage alliance. Since the main setting of this dissertation is the central market, a number of other ethnic groups are also present. The people who do not or are not able to identify themselves with the *pela-gandong* are referred to by their ethnic origin (the one they identify themselves with) or the term *migrant* to differentiate them from the native group.

To define the research setting, I follow Ellen's (2003) understanding of the patterns of the trade network in the Moluccas, "the trading zones identified for the Moluccas, they are dependent locally upon highly connected peripheries, which provide for great system flexibility and resilience" (p. 208). Ambon Island was once the center of the Moluccan trading zones, situated adjacent to Banda Island. As the markets and borderline trade points were mostly spread out in the administrative area of Ambon City, I believe it is helpful to outline the geographical context of this particular area. Ambon City covers most of Ambon Island, with a total area of 377 Km2.[1] It was established as the capital city of the Maluku province in 1958 as per Law No. 20 on the formation of the first-level autonomous region of Maluku. Therefore, most of the bureaucratic centers were built in Ambon City, including the governor's office, regional parliament, Maluku provincial military

[1] Government Regulation No. 13 the Year 1979

(TNI) headquarters, and provincial police (Polri) headquarters. However, during the communal conflicts between 1999 and 2002, most of the buildings, including the institutional ones, were burned down or abolished. Thanks to Presidential Instruction No. 6 in 2003, the central and local governments had a legal basis to accelerate the development and revitalization process in the aftermath of the conflicts in the Maluku province, including renovations for a number of governmental buildings (Sitepu, 2007).

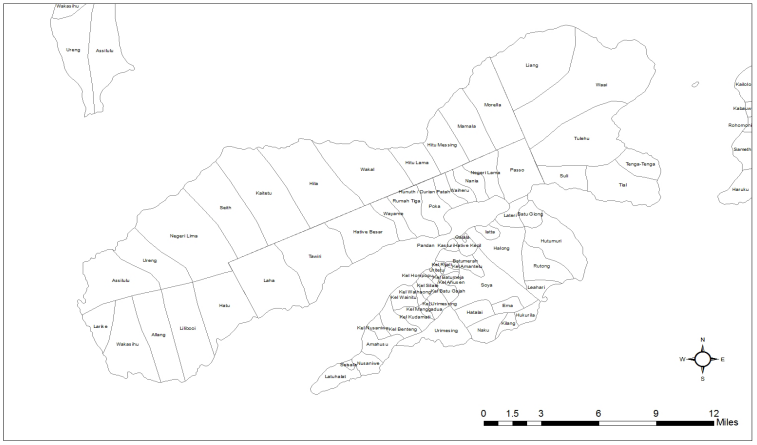
Throughout its existence, Ambon has experienced various migration flows, in addition to the societal changes, that diversified the population of the city. Migrants came to the island due to the presence of ample economic opportunities, especially those related to trade (Sholeh, 2013). Others came to Maluku from dense areas in Indonesia, such as Java Island, as part of the transmigration government program, which aimed to diffuse the population density of Indonesia. With Indonesia's independence came streams of Indonesian soldiers and policemen throughout the three major political stages—the Old Order (the Soekarno regime), the New Order (the Soeharto regime), and recent years—to prevent tensions and stamp out possible disruptions in the area (Pamungkas, 2015). While civil migrants from the neighboring islands were mostly identified as people from South and Southeast Sulawesi at the beginning of the 1970s, these migrants accounted for the increased number of Muslims in Ambon (Sholeh, 2013). Furthermore, due to the government-organized transmigration projects, other ethnically different migrants such as the Javanese opted to settle in northern Seram and Buru Island and later moved to Ambon Island for better economic access (Pamungkas, 2015).

These migrants, who were notably Buginese, Butonese, and Makasarese (commonly called BBM), dominated the petty trade and informal service sector with small shops, restaurants, and local transportation (pedicabs and motorbike taxis) as well as the

labor sector by getting involved in construction work and similar tasks (Adam, 2008b) . The Moluccans dominated the agricultural wholesale business, governmental administration, services (the hotel and restaurant ownership), and financial services sectors (Amirrachman, 2007). The continuous influx of migrants from outside the Maluku Island resulted in heavy tensions and arguably fueled the conflicts in the area (Adam, 2008b; Pamungkas, 2015; Sholeh, 2013). During and in the aftermath of the conflicts, a large number of migrants left the city, but soon after the conflicts subsided, the number of migrants returning to Ambon was almost the same as the number present prior to the conflicts. While the economic and political gaps led to the common occurrence of heated tension between the Muslim and Christian communities, the native and the migrant communities did not always have an antagonistic relationship; rather, they shared a complementary and mutually dependent dynamic, especially in trade and agriculture as previously stated (Amirrachman, 2007; Kadir, 2017).

As for the city itself, Ambon consists of five subdistricts, namely Sirimau, Nusaniwe, Teluk Ambon, Teluk Ambon Baguala, and South Leitimur. In addition, 50 *kelurahan*/villages belong to these five subdistricts. Over the last three decades, the population growth in Ambon City fluctuated from 275,888 in 1990 to 191,561 in 2000, and reached 331,254 inhabitants in 2010 (BPS Kota Ambon, 2011). The subdistrict of Sirimau was the most densely populated area, followed by Nusaniwe, Teluk Ambon Baguala, Teluk Ambon, and South Leitimur.

Map 1 Map of Ambon Island



In the time of writing this dissertation, the demographic status of Ambon City amounts to 391,488 people (BPS Kota Ambon, 2018) with 195,717 Muslims and 173,075 Christians, while the Roman Catholics accounted for 22,123 people. However, it is common for the Ambonese people to believe that either the Christians are more in number or that the Muslims and Christians are equally divided. Despite Muslims and Christians having resided in the same areas for centuries, they never really mixed in terms of their residential neighborhoods, or, as some would argue, they were mentally segregated (Aritonang & Steenbrink, 2008). However, the intervillage and interreligious marriage was already a common practice before the 1999 conflicts. For example, members of two interreligious villages which were tied with local wisdom relation of *pela tempat sirih* (*pela* betel-box) were allowed to marry to each other (Iwamony, 2010). Such traditional relation will be further elaborated in the following section. In addition, people living on this island always associated certain villages or areas with particular religious identities, even though the population was *de facto* quite mixed back then (Pariela, 2005).

The density level of each area in Ambon City relies on various aspects. For instance, the Sirimau subdistrict is where most governmental offices and important economic-related areas are situated, along with several markets and trading areas; therefore, its strategic location attracts people to its neighboring residential areas. In addition, the conflicts seemed to render and reconfigure the distribution of inhabitants in certain areas of Ambon City. Prior to the communal conflicts, some areas were inhabited by both Muslims and Christians; this situation changed due to the large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Ambon and the geographical segregation between the two religious communities that was inevitable during the conflict period. This resulted in a new configuration of the population in Ambon City: for example, the population of Batu Merah Village was affected by the influx of Muslim refugees during the communal conflicts and afterwards. Similarly, Passo Village and *Kelurahan* Kudamati became the settlement destination for Christian communities (Pamungkas, 2015; Kadir, 2017).

Apart from living in religiously segregated villages, religious separation was also strongly present in the society's labor division. The Christian communities received favorable opportunities "to access jobs such as lower officers in the administration and especially as Moluccan soldiers in the Netherlands army in the East Indies" (Sholeh, 2013, p. 304). Meanwhile in some villages, most of their residents were peasants generating money from cash crops such as cloves, nutmeg and coconut (Sholeh, 2013). The Muslim communities occupied the trade and sailing in the Moluccas, (Leirissa, 2000). The migrants, consisting of Buton-Bugis-Makassaresse (BBM) and people from Java and Padang, have been involved in various precarious jobs such as petty trade and private transport (pedicab and motorcycle taxi driver) prior to the conflicts (Adam, 2008b; Adam & Peilouw, 2008)

3.3 Historical Background

The religious struggles in the Moluccan region started with the coming of Islam through trading in the late fifteenth century, long before Indonesia's independence, when Christianity was imposed on the Moluccan population by both the Portuguese (Catholicism in 1512) and the Dutch (Protestantism in 1599) (Braeuchler, 2013; 2015; Leirissa, 2000; Sholeh, 2013). As a result of these colonial powers, the people in the Moluccas were segregated into monoreligious village units. Due to this, the society had to face sharpened group boundaries along with the existing local power struggles and traditional rivalries (Leirissa, 1995). Further, during the Dutch colonial rule, religious discrimination became a common practice, which is believed to have been the strongest dividing factor. "Christians were given preferential treatment in education and the bureaucracy from the mid-nineteenth century onwards" (Braeuchler, 2015, p. 75). Although both communities tried to maintain religious harmony for decades, residual tension due to the discrimination and previous conflicts lingered among them. Moreover, the religiously segregated neighborhoods established prior to the 1999 conflicts became even more divisive during and after the conflicts. The latent tension between the Muslims and Christians was also strongly apparent in the recent conflicts, wherein Islam represented resistance against the Dutch colonial legacy and Christianity (Braeuchler, 2015).

Before focusing on Ambon Island, I provide a brief background on the Moluccan archipelago which Ambon Island is a part of and holds a focal role. Maluku has long been associated with wars, fractions, and tensions over the transfer of power, traditionally as well as from a contemporary standpoint. People tend to unconsciously possess the idea that since conflicts occurred in the past, future outbreaks would, perhaps, be just around the corner (Sitepu, 2007). Not long after the continuous attempts to

conquer the islands due to the infamous nutmeg discovery in the 16th century, peace and order in Maluku were just as rare as nutmeg in the Western world at that time (Leirissa, 2000). Meanwhile, at the beginning of the modern Maluku period, right after the Indonesian independence in 1945, this region seemed to get left behind in the nationwide celebration, arguing whether they would submit themselves to the newly born republic or maintain their affiliation towards the colonial administration. In 1950, some 4,000 soldiers and their families decided to leave the now Maluku and North Maluku provinces and head to the Netherlands (Chauvel, 1990).

With Indonesia's strong claim as being a pluralistic society since its independence in 1945, maintaining social cohesion through religious harmony and fostering economic growth were the main goals of the government during Soeharto's New Order era (Beck, 2002). However, feeling like they were being neglected led to frustration among the Muslims and inevitably triggered outbreaks of violence, threatening the religious pluralism of the country. Mukti Ali, the then Minister of Religious Affairs, introduced the concept of *agree to disagree,* which aimed to promote studies on comparative religion as well as the practice of interreligious dialogue to bring stability to the society. Mukti Ali argued that "interreligious dialogue does not have to focus on theological issues but on the social-religious issues which are at the center of every religious community" (Beck, 2002, p. 223) and that the harmonious coexistence of the various religious communities could be made possible by fostering mutual respect and tolerance. To this end, a new policy titled *Tri Kerukunan* was issued during the period of 1978–1982*,* including three pillars of harmony: (1) internal harmony among various factions within a certain religion; (2) harmony among the various religions; (3) harmony between the various religions and the government (p. 226). However, these efforts could not forestall the growing intolerance, and outbreaks of

ethno-religious communal violence rose in the country after the fall of the Soeharto regime in 1998. Amirrachman (2007) argued that the norms and cultural values of the people in Maluku gradually decreased, causing a rise in conflict, and the *musyawarah* or multi-stakeholders' dialogue to reach consensus lost its function, resulting in greater distrust among the society members.

In 1997, Indonesia was one of the countries most impacted by the Asian financial crisis (AFC) and the GDP experienced a "catastrophic contraction of 13.1% in 1998, followed by negligible growth in 1999" (Basri & Hill, 2011). In a recent report published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Basri (2018) argued that Indonesia's weak responses to the AFC was due to its banking sector being weak. The unstable political climate in 1998 due to the fall of the Soeharto government worsened the economic crisis. Indonesia then entered a brand new phase of its existence and evolved into a democratic country due to the reformation movement. Amirrachman (2007) argued that decentralization, as a part of the flagship product of the reformation era, resulted in exaggerated euphoria, especially among the native people who had the opportunity to assume power. This increased the dichotomy between the natives and migrants, fearing that equal opportunity in politics would reduce the native people's chance to remain in power after three decades of centralization (Sholeh, 2013; van Klinken, 2001, 2007).

After three decades of the Soeharto government's rule, the country's political turn resulted in chaos, and communal violence broke out in several provinces between 1997 and 2003. Stores, regardless of their size, were plundered and pillaged. The Chinese were one of the main targets, and they suffered from economic, physical, and psychological damages. The political shift from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one, policy shift from centralized to decentralized, and split between the police

and military forces invited speculation that the country would collapse. Indonesia's loss of the then Timor Timur province (now Timor Leste), which gained its independence through a public opinion poll in 1999, arguably inspired and fostered insurgency group movements in the provinces of Aceh, Papua, and Maluku to demand a chance to leave the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. In 1999, a year after the reformation, Maluku was shaken by prolonged communal violence, resulting in an unstable region and a highly distrustful society (Sholeh, 2013). Set against this backdrop, the following section will focus on the conflicts in Maluku and, especially, the violence in Ambon.

3.4 Understanding the Moluccan Culture

3.4.1 Dyadic relationship. The eastern part of Indonesia is quite distinguishable to the western part; apart from the differences in physical traits, ethnicity, and language, the natives of Eastern Indonesia also follow a different social system and culture. For instance, the Moluccans use a number of linked word pairs in dyadic verse to express their world, such as pela gandong, salam–sarani (Muslim–Christian), etc. The existing paired concepts were based on the paired categories from the pre-colonial period, which were widely used to emphasize contrasting and complementary elements (Kadir, 2017; Ellen, 2003). In the context of Maluku, Van Minde (1997) argued that the lives of the people revolved around love and hate relationships, and with such complex social interactions taking place, commerce provided the space where alliances, rivalries, and feuds were developed. In a similar vein, Kadir (2017) also embarked on the same notion of gift exchange and debt, especially among the migrant traders in Maluku, not only showing reciprocity but also the dyadic relationship between love and hate.

Another example of the gift-exchange practices is that between the Sultanate of Tidore and Sultanate of Ternate in the now North Maluku Province (Ellen, 2003). Although both sultanates were in constant warfare, their relationship was also known as the wife-giver to the wife-taker, in which the Tidore Sultanate provided the wife to the Sultan of Ternate, resulting in the upscaling of Tidore's symbolic position over the Ternate's. Moreover, Ellen (2003) also indicated the presence of such a complementary relationship in the form of the shifting center model of core-periphery trading systems, covering the Tidore and Geser-Gorom zones (in the Eastern Seram Island) of political influence and trade despite the historical tension between these areas. After Indonesia's independence, such a pairing was apparent in the dynamic between the native and the migrant communities in Maluku, especially between the natives and Butonese and the Butonese and Chinese, resulting in long historical dyadic contracts (Foster, 1963 in Ellen, 2003).

This tug-of-war relationship opened up two possibilities: cooperation and conflict at the same time, where conflict is just around the corner, so as cooperation. A conflict was never a solid conflict, and cooperation was based on trickery (Kadir, 2017). It was as if the groups could not live together but also could not live without each other.

3.4.2 Oral tradition. The Moluccan society is known for its strong oral tradition, which is embedded in the everyday lives of the community members and gets manifested in various types of interactions, including interreligious engagement. Lattu and Berling (2015) argued that despite the domination of textual and scriptural concepts as well as the tendency to enact elite-based concepts associated with interreligious dialogue, oral forms of collective memory in Christian–Muslim engagements were more effective for sharing narratives in Maluku. Similarly, Rhoads (2010) emphasized

the difference that oral tradition makes to the dynamics of a society, highlighting the relation between oral tradition, collective memory, and a collectivist culture where an individual's identity is drawn from their collective identity. While Lattu and Berling (2015) focused on cultural production in the form of ritual performances, oral narratives, and folk songs to articulate interreligious engagement, Rhoads was more interested in analyzing spaces and places where such oral traditions took places. Furthermore, Rhoads (2010) emphasized the importance of marketplaces as the center of social interactions, where people are around other people all the time and everyone talks with one another in the designated space or place. Rhoads (2010) stated that oral tradition was the most common mode of communication in society, considering the example of the early Christianity period, during which informal gossip at the marketplace was one of the community's means of recalling Christian traditions. Furthermore, Rhoads (2010) pointed out that the community members tend to use proverbs and parables to associate the stories with reality, and words are perceived to have power. Mai & Buchholt (1987) argued that East Indonesians, especially the villagers, perceived the market as a place to fulfill their need for an informal public space where an exchange of local news, including private and public gossip, could take place. This implies that oral tradition requires cultural production (Lattu & Berling, 2015) and/or space and place (Rhoads, 2010) to exist and be performed in a society.

3.4 Pela gandong. The Ambonese society held up their traditional relations called *pela* and *gandong* as part of their local wisdom. The term *pela* itself refers to "an enduring and inviolable brotherhood between all peoples of the partner villages" (Bartels, 2017, p.177). Tamalene et al (2014) describes local wisdom as a set of knowledge embedded to a community living in particular location which

include values and norms. Haba (2008) added the important role of local wisdom in strengthening social cohesion within society. This local wisdom ties communities together despite their different religious backgrounds, especially Muslims and Christians. Bartels (1977) pointed out three types of pela: *pela keras* (hard pela)*, pela gandong* (brotherhood pela)*,* and *pela tempat sirih* (betel-box pela). The *pela keras* emerges from the reconciliation after wars, resulting in a familial alliance between the two parties; due to this, members from the two villages are forbidden from marrying one another. The *pela gandong,* which is common in the current Ambonese society, is based on the relationship with an ancestor who came from the same family but was forced to live, or chose to live, in a different place. The last one is *pela tempat sirih* which is the result of a small misperception or dispute between two parties and, therefore, reconciliation rebuilds relations between them. (Bartels, 1977; Cooley, 1962; Iwamony, 2010)

The *pela* tradition is not only present on Ambon Island but also on other islands in Central Maluku, such as Haruku, Saparua, and Nusa Laut, and has different names in other parts of the province. Cultural ties are also manifested through different forms, for example, *famili* or *fam* are used to refer to kinship based on the family name. Further, *masohi*, *badati,* and *maano* refer to a form of social-economic cooperation among the people of Maluku. In the southeastern part of Maluku, a customary tradition called *sasi* is performed to manage natural resources; it forbids the community members from exploiting the forest or the sea as an environmental balance to protect the future is imperative in the long run. Another example is *makan patita* or eating together; this practice has been widely used and, especially, revived in the aftermath of the Maluku conflicts for reconciliation between the two groups over food (Amirrachman, 2007).

To ensure that *pela* works, there are four conditions: (1) villages in a *pela* relationship assist one another in times of crisis (natural disaster, war, etc.); (2) if needed, one partner village has to assist the other in the undertaking of large community projects, including the building of churches, mosques, and schools and the mutual celebration of festivities; (3) the receiving village has to ensure that the *pela* members are generously provided with food during a visit, and individual members are allowed to take agricultural products home with them; (4) all the members of villages in a *pela* relationship are seen as family and sharing the same blood, and, therefore, they are spared from possible marriages as it would be considered incestuous (Bartels, 2017). If one of the parties deliberately goes against these rules, it is believed that they would face bad consequences as a form of punishment by their ancestors who founded the relationship in the first place. The punishment involves, but is not limited to, illness, death, and other misfortunes to the offenders or their immediate relatives. As for the marriage taboo, if one is caught breaking it, the couple would be paraded around their respective villages and humiliated, thus making them regret their actions. In addition, it is believed that the couple would be severely punished by their ancestors. However, the marriage taboos do not apply for all kind of *pela*s. As mentioned earlier, interreligious marriage among members of *pela tempat sirih* (batel box pela) have been a common occurrence in the Moluccas (Iwamony, 2010).

Among the three types of *pela,* the *pela gandong,* which is based on ancestral brotherhood or genealogical ties and not war, is considered as the strongest type of relationship. The word *gandong* is related to Indonesian word *kandungan* (uterus), implying that the ancestors were born from the same mother. During conflicts and in their aftermaths, the *pela* was commonly referred to as the main glue which contributed to bringing about peace between the

Muslim and Christian communities. *Pela* constituted a symbol of brotherhood, reconciliation, and peace for the Ambonese society, and not only did *pela* partners refuse to attack each other, but they also protected and helped each other irrespective of their religious backgrounds. After having this traditional relationship for decades, the conflicts that arose in Maluku took most observers by surprise (Braeuchler, 2015; Soselisa, 2000). This traditional relationship is later used in this dissertation to describe the social capital among the native traders at the marketplace or in economic transactions, which seems to overlap with the dichotomy of Muslim–Christian relationship.

Hermien Soselisa, an Ambonese anthropologist, conducted a research study on the small island of Buano in West Seram, Central Maluku, to study the *pela* relationship between two villages affiliated to two different religions, Islam and Christianity (2000). She concluded that the Christians and the Muslim maintained their kinship. Although they faced a rocky situation when the communal violence broke out on Ambon Island, both villages reconciled after realizing that they were mutually dependent on each other for farming and produce distribution. The problem in revitalizing the social fabric through *pela gandong* arose with the involvement of the non-native Ambonese, i.e., the migrants. Despite being large in number, the migrants in Ambon, with the Bugis, Butonese, and Makassarese (BBM) as the majority, were excluded from the intervillage alliance.

Kadir (2017) extensively discussed the ambivalence of the identity and citizenship status of the Butonese migrants on Ambon Island and the rural area of Ceram Island. Kadir maintained that instead of using the cultural pact to recast the relationship with other ethnic groups in the aftermath of communal conflicts, the Butonese used the gift-exchange mechanism to strengthen or re-establish their social ties and, thereby, smoothen their business.

Kadir's choice of focusing on the Butonese migrants successfully filled in the literature gap mentioned by Braeuchler (2015) in the conclusion of her book. These migrant actors were excluded from most of the post-conflict peacebuilding literature in terms of how the Ambonese society repaired the relationships among the communities through the revival of local wisdom, especially the *pela-gandong* traditional pact.

However, Iwamony (2010) had earlier tried to provide this missing link by suggesting the *pela* should have taken on a new form instead of depending on the oath of ancestors in order to adapt with Maluku's social transformation post the conflict. Iwamony (2010) tried to analyze the reconciliatory potential of the *pela* by examining the role of the Gereja Protestan Maluku (GPM) or the Protestant Church of Maluku. This study emphasized the need to find new perspectives on the *pela* as part of the Christians' idea of reconciliation to help develop a cultural as well as a religious system of reconciliation. The new *pela* should have been based on "an individual initiative to break all kinds of alienation or estrangement in the life of human beings" (Iwamony, p. 150). In the conclusion, Iwamony (2010) pointed out that for *pela* to become a way of reconciliation, it had to be understood as a social and religious commitment since it promotes brother–sister relations and the idea that all human beings are family. The attempts to revive and warm up the ties between the two villages (*panas pela*) were, therefore, crucial to not only remember their past oaths but also to allow the new generation and outsiders understand and incorporate the *pela* into a broader social scope. As previously mentioned on the oral tradition in Maluku, Lattu and Berling (2015) studied *pela* as a part of the indigenous practices and peacebuilding processes in Maluku. In this study, the *pela* relation was positioned in the oral-oriented societies as a symbolic, imagined model for interreligious relationships, especially between the Muslims and Christians. The researchers

explored the local dynamics of interreligious peacebuilding through the reconstruction of past and collective memory manifested in folksongs, oral narratives, and ritual performances.

3.5 Conflict and peacebuilding efforts. Various studies have been conducted to answer the basic question of the root of the communal conflicts that occurred in Ambon City (Duncan, 2014; Spyer, 2002; Van Klinken, 2001, 2007). Two main arguments are presented in the literature related to the communal conflicts after the fall of the Soeharto regime. The continuous competition for access to economic and political resources and the uncertainty present during the turmoil period were said to constitute the political-economic explanation for the conflicts, while the religious and ethnic labels were believed to be used as a camouflage for the real reasons (Adam, 2008b; Van Klinken, 2007). Duncan (2014) adopted these two perspectives, in which he concluded that apart from those who recognized religion as the basis for the violence (Sidel, 2006), local people believed that the political and economic issues were set up to hide the true religious goals behind the violence. For this reason, this dissertation considers the elements of both the arguments to have contributed to the conflict instead of focusing only on one reason.

Table 1 The Timeline of the Conflict in Maluku from 1999 to 2004

Year	Month	Incident
1999	January	Small-scale street fights escalated into riots in Ambon City and its surrounding areas.
	March	Mass violence spread to other islands in Maluku.
	May	The general election campaign began, and the violence declined.
	June	The general election was held.

	July	Mass violence restarted in Ambon City.
	October	North Maluku Province separated from Maluku Province.
	December	Conflict escalated after Silo Church was burned down, and a massacre took place in the Muslim village of Tobelo in North Maluku.
2000	May	Laskar Jihad arrived in Ambon.
	June	A massacre occurred in Galela near Tobelo in North Maluku. Police weapons were stolen and distributed to civilians. Civil emergency was declared in Maluku and North Maluku, and thousands of troops were deployed.
	December	The Maluku Front Sovereignty (FKM) declared independence of the "Republic of South Maluku" (RMS).
2001	January	The army's joint battalion (Yongab) conducted a "sweeping operation" that targeted the strongholds of Muslim groups.
	June	Yongab conducted another "sweeping operation."
2002	February	The Malino Peace Agreement (Malino II) was signed.
	April	The Malukan provincial government office was burned down. Soya Village was attacked, after which violence began to decline in Maluku.
	May	Ja'far Umar Talib and Alex Manuputti, the leaders of the Laskar Jihad and FKM, were both arrested.
	October	The Laskar Jihad was dissolved from Maluku

2003	May	Civil emergency was lifted from the North Maluku province.
	September	Civil emergency was lifted from the Maluku province.
2004	April	FKM raised the RMS flag, prompting riots in Ambon City which left 40 dead.
	June	General election was held.

Source: taken from a report published by Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (Asi et al, 2011)

The casualty numbers dispersed among the scholars, NGO reports, and National Violence Monitoring System (NVMS) in 1999 accounted for 1460 deaths, which increased to 3,000 (Sihbudi, 2001) and then around 4,840 lives; of these casualties 1,907 of them were in the city of Ambon (Varshney et al., 2004, pp. 30-34). However, the number differs significantly depending on the source, and due to the ambiguity and unavailability of reliable data, local scholars tend to not specify the number of the victims, leaving the narrative as vague as "in addition to the number of victims killed and injured" (Ernas, 2015, p. 235). The constantly rising death toll forced the government to stabilize the areas by deploying more soldiers while brokering peace talks at the same time. As with most conflicts, this decision resulted in a mixed response due to the possibility of an escalated situation if more soldiers got directly involved in the conflict or, worse, if they took a side in the conflict as was the case during the Ambon communal violence (Spyer, 2002). Due to the delicate situation, it was difficult to reveal the number of casualties on each side and decide which group suffered more than the other.

In the following months of 2002, peace and stability were still a distant reality. The *pela-gandong* ties were cut and interreligious relations were damaged, resulting in the growth of hatred and

revenge between the two communities and an increasing number of victims. People were relocated and segregated based on their religion, children grew up surrounded by violence, and education was disrupted by the conflicts. Bombings took place every couple of months, resulting in skepticism among the people about the elite's method of resolving conflicts as it did not seem to work. While various initiatives had been carried out by external actors, including international NGOs and local NGOs, the continuing violence on ground indicated the failure of the government-led peacebuilding approaches. Meanwhile, ceremonial activities to promote peace flourished throughout the years. A peace parade was held around downtown Ambon City, initiated by two *pela-gandong* village communities Hulaleu (Christian) and Kailolo (Muslim), who were arguably the most respected, powerful, and feared groups during the conflicts. The parade ended with a ritual called *makan patita* (or simply put, eat together) between these two clans, formalizing their reconciliation of past issues (Iwamony, 2010).

The physical communal violence in Ambon arguably ended with the signing of the Malino II peace agreement on February 11 and 12, 2002, two months after the Malino I negotiations to resolve conflict in Poso, Central Sulawesi, despite a big riot that erupted just after the delegates arrived back in Ambon. Similar to the previous accord, the negotiations were supported by the central government and facilitated by the Minister of People's Welfare Jusuf Kalla and Coordinating Minister of Politics, Legal, and Security Affairs Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (Ernas, 2012). A total of 70 representatives, including actors from various backgrounds such as religious leaders, *adat* (customary) leaders, academics, and grassroots representatives attended the meeting, with an equal number of Muslims and Christians. Top-level national and provincial government officials led the negotiations process. Braeuchler (2015) argued that it was one of the first government-supported peace initiatives that even

partially succeeded in halting the communal violence in Indonesia. The accord comprised of an 11-point plan, as given below[2]:

1. Bring an end to the conflict and all kinds of violence.
2. Uphold the supremacy of justice in a lawful, stringent, impartial, and honest way, with support from the entire population.
3. Refuse and combat all sorts of separatist activities and organizations, including the Republic of South Maluku (Republik Maluku Selatan/RMS).
4. The Moluccan people have the right to live, work, and be active in the entirety of Indonesia. Likewise, Indonesian non-Moluccans have the legal right to live, work, and be active in the Maluku province under the condition that they respect and follow the local culture and uphold the security and local regulations.
5. All kinds of organizations, denominations, groups, and *laskar* are not allowed to possess weaponry without permission. They must either hand over their weapons, or the weapons will be confiscated, whereupon they will be prosecuted according to the law.
6. A national independent team will be established to conclusively investigate the event of 19 January 1999 (the start of the conflict).
7. The refugees/IDPs will be returned to their original homesteads without any compulsions, maintaining all of their legal rights (to be carried out in stages based on the local actual conditions).
8. The government will assist people in matters of mental and social rehabilitation and in rebuilding the economy and public facilities.

[2] http://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ID_020214_Moluccas%20Agreement%20in%20Malino%20(Malino%20II).pdf

9. The stability and strength of the military and police forces, according to their respective functions, are categorically necessary to maintain discipline and security in the entire area.
10. To guarantee proper communication and harmony among the various religious denominations in the Moluccas, all forms of religious services and the religious displays will respect the local diversity and culture.
11. To endorse the rehabilitation of the Pattimura University, based on the principle that the situation is meant to foster common welfare, the system of recruitment and all other measures will take place openly and impartially while safeguarding the necessary quality standards.

When the Malino II peace talks took place, the Christian and Muslim delegates agreed that religion had to be the entry point for reconciliation, followed by traditional/customary values. Compared to the first Malino agreement, Malino II provided elaborate aims and guidelines for various parties, including the local and central government and the local people. Being a semi-government-led initiative where the government acted as a facilitator instead of taking part as actor in the negotiation process. Ernas (2012) describes the role of the government as to facilitate preliminary intrareligious meetings for Muslims and Christians, as well as to design the negotiation method to help smoothen the two delegations reach an agreement. This agreement managed to meet the top-down approach criteria as opposed to involving various parallel on-ground movements (bottom-up approach). The top-down approach addressed the three main issues in a specific order: religion, culture, and economy. Religion was considered the main issue to address and the immediate solution for conflict resolution, followed by the strong cultural values of the Moluccan

communities (Braeuchler, 2015; Ernas, 2012). However, to bring the religious issue to the negotiation table, it was admitted to be a difficult task for both delegations. Before the summit meeting of Malino II, religious issues including whether or not the delegation should include Laskar Jihad (for Muslim side) and Front Kedaulatan Maluku – the Maluku Sovereingty Front (FKM) (Ernas, 2012). In the end, both parties were not involved in the peace process. The economic and political factors supported these two issues.

Meanwhile, the bottom-up approach used by the NGOs, civil society organizations and their economic transactions were considered by the government as the first layer of the peacebuilding efforts. The economic interactions allowed them to exercise a basic survival strategy to fulfill their basic needs, and the conflict situation, arguably, did not hinder the Ambonese community from this everyday practice (Adam, 2008b, 2013). However, the relatively stable situation in Ambon was ruined when big riots took place all over the city on April 25, 2004. This time it was linked to the celebration of the Republic of South Maluku (Republik Maluku Selatan - RMS) independence day, which was closely associated to the interests of the Christian community. At least fourty people died during this incident (Asi et al, 2011; ICG, 2004).

In the same month, the then president Megawati visited Ambon for an hour to express her concern about the outbreak of violence.[3] That year, she had to compete in the first democratic presidential election with her former Coordinating Minister of Politics, Legal, and Security Affairs Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who had a military background. Megawati lost to him in the second round of the election. Yudhoyono paired with Jusuf Kalla, the Coordinating Minister of People'sWelfare in Megawati's administration. Both of

[3] President Megawati (r. 2001–2004) came to Ambon to visit the conflict victims at hospitals and conducted dialogues with local leaders and local government to understand the situation on the premises.

them were the high-level representatives of the central government present for the Malino II peace agreement to resolve the Ambon conflicts. It was speculated that the conflicts were instigated by the military with the aim of gaining back the image of military power (Waileruny, 2010). However, this potential plan fell through as most of the Ambonese people lost their trust in the military and police interventions after the riots. Prior to the reformation era, police force was part of the military force (now called Tentara Nasional Indonesia, previously used Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia/ABRI). Sholeh (2013) points out that the renewal of national security policy where military was expected to do internal reform potentially fueled the outbreak of the communal conflict. In 2002, Mohammad Shoelhi had published a book to provide a counter-narrative to the blame placed on Laskar Jihad, arguing that the government needed to self-evaluate their conflict mishandling before making the Laskar Jihad and its leader, Ja'far Umar Thalib, the scapegoat of the Maluku conflict.

It was a moment of truth for the Ambonese people when they realized that they had been used to further the elites' interest. Further, due to the accusations about the strong ties between the RMS and Christians, it came to light that several priests had expressed their disappointment towards the state, implying that the Christians had been used as scapegoats to make it seem like they were the separatists. Waileruny (2010) argued that the communal conflicts in Ambon were proof of the state's failure. It was the tactic of *divide et impera* (divide and rule) all over again; the Christians were labeled as separatists and the Muslims as jihadi terrorists, while the state could get away with it. Kadir (2017) questioned the result of the conflicts, stating that there was no victor. In a more practical way, Adam (2008) perceived the end result of conflict as the downgrading of the Christians' status in the society as they took up informal and blue-collar jobs, while the Muslims obtained relatively

equal access to work in governmental institutions as well as the opportunity to become politicians. Apart from these, neither party won the conflict; rather, both of the communities were the victims. As most literature on peacebuilding would suggest, one of the most common practices in building peace involves acknowledging that both sides were the victims.

Chapter 4

Methodology:

Ethnographic Research in a Post-Conflict Society

4.1 Introduction

When talking about a society's culture, we often come across the saying, "culture is to humans as water is to fish." Braeuchler (2015), citing Vel's (2008) work on the Sumbanese tradition, argued that it is delicate to ask the community to define their own *adat* as it would be comparable to "asking a fish to define water" (p. 44). Such a premise also establishes the importance for an ethnographer to maintain a certain amount of distance during their fieldwork, trying to look at a phenomenon from outsider's view. Further, the argument implies that an outsider's view arguably helps obtain more balanced and objective accounts of the culture being studied.

However, isn't the inability to maintain balance and objectivity while pursuing empirical research rooted in the limited educational resources of the native society members, for instance? Concurrently, there is scant attention paid to methodological literature that can help prepare native members to learn about their own culture. More specifically, it relates to the tendency of knowledge production being mushroomed by academics outside the society at stake.

With respect to the knowledge production of social research in Southeast Asia, Gerke and Evers (2018) argued that "only part of this globalized knowledge is locally produced ... only part of this widely available knowledge on individual countries is actually researched and published by members of that particular national society." (p. 247). In other words, the representation of local voices is restricted in ongoing global conversations.

Through this chapter, I propose a methodological turn towards approaching peacebuilding at the grassroots level. I argue that although fish would not be able to define water, they can surely depict the world underwater in a rigorous manner. Therefore, supporting local voices and enabling them to define peacebuilding from their perspective is as important as examining the internationally approved peacebuilding measures set to be implemented in a conflict-prone society. I do not intend to claim that my approach is brand new or that it is always efficient, but it is a method worth exploring to identify its potential.

On the other hand, a local Moluccan saying goes, "If you have not eaten fish today, then you have not eaten at all," which signifies that fish is an important and integral part of the Moluccan society. To this point, I would first like to clarify that this dissertation is not focused on fish. However, to honor the importance of fish in the daily lifestyle of locals during the conflicts in the Moluccas, this dissertation will surely include a number of fish-related conflict narratives. For example, in some parts of the Moluccas, fish and religion were once closely associated; Muslim fish and Christian fish were distinguished between to specify the spatial origin of the caught fish. In Chapter 5, this simple anecdote is shown to have laid a foundation for the bigger scale of societal issues within the Moluccan society, especially in relation to the religion-based segregation, commodity scarcity, and distribution problems during the conflicts. However, to better understand the micro-societal

context, it needs to be taken out of its origin to explain the bigger picture of what is going on in the larger societal context.

The two aforementioned fish analogies are used as gateways to guide our understanding of the Moluccan society. With such examples, I examine the methodological consequences of this research, especially the combination of emic and etic insights on everyday peacebuilding. First, from an emic perspective, getting the Moluccans to describe their own culture and conflict-related experiences in their own terms and expressions is arguably as challenging as asking fish to define water. In the following chapters, I explain how several terms in the native dialect of the locals helped them navigate their everyday lives throughout the conflict periods. Despite the inevitable insider bias involved in obtaining the data, I argue that it is time for local voices to be heard when it comes to building peace in a socio-culturally diverse society. Second, analyzing the empirical data collected through observation and documentation through the etic lens helps achieve an impartial and culturally neutral account of everyday peacebuilding. The use of the four concepts of marketplaces, trade, traders, and everyday peacebuilding is crucial to make sense of the data collected in the field for this dissertation.

Nevertheless, the following question remains: How can a fruitful interaction between an insider's view of the Moluccan society's reconstruction from the emic perspective and the translation of empirical data using the theoretical framework from the etic perspective be achieved? I argue that an ethnographic strategy would be suited to achieving the objectives of this research and would provide an all-encompassing understanding of the complex issues at the grassroots level. I believe that strong data triangulation, through the use of several interchangeable qualitative methods, is pertinent to support this strategy.

The current chapter starts with an overview of the research design, in which I present the main methodological argument of this dissertation. This is followed by the methods section, wherein I outline the different methods employed during the preliminary and actual fieldwork. The third section consists of the sample strategy, in which I emphasize on how an arguably high degree of diversity was achieved during the sampling. The subsequent section relates to the data collection stage. In this section, I highlight the two main phases of the fieldwork conducted, the challenges faced, and how they were overcome. The next section consists of the data analysis; I examine the intertwined processes of data collection and data analysis as well as data confirmation. I then present the research quality indicator. Last, reflections on the methodology are provided along with the main critiques and arguments against it, especially on my positionality as a local researcher in a familiar setting.

4.2 Research Design

I would like to begin my methodological argument by pointing out the need to uplift the importance of an ethnographic strategy for approaching a conflict-affected society. I am aware that this type of argument has been discussed in the body of peace study literature, especially over the past two decades. However, my aim here is to continue the ongoing debate on the need for interdisciplinary studies in peacebuilding, such as a combination of anthropology and international relations (Braeuchler, 2015; Richmond, 2018), as well as highlight the debates on "searching for peace" instead of focusing on "stopping the violence" per se (Vogel, 2016).

Although an ethnographic strategy has been employed to collect the data, this research is not anthropological in nature as the research topic does not primarily revolve around the study of humans and human behavior in a society. Rather, it is an interdisciplinary study

on the role of economic activities in everyday peacebuilding, which are reflected by the dynamics of the marketplaces and trade activities in a conflict-prone society. Thus, the entry point for the fieldwork was the idea of market and trade as spatial entities and how they affect society. Furthermore, although the research setting is focused on the development of several physical spaces, the main aim is to follow the shift, development, and impairment of markets and trade points as active and socially functioning spaces in their role in everyday peacebuilding.

In doing so, as previously outlined in the Context chapter, the administrative boundaries of the research setting are a fluid collection of spatial nodes connected by a network of commodity distribution patterns and trading routes. The progression of this dissertation is aimed at capturing the historical perspective as well as the current situation in the field. Therefore, the historical parts of the analytical market descriptions belong to the findings section instead of the context one, for instance. Nevertheless, due to the limitation of collective memory recollection, the historical accounts presented in this dissertation are not aimed at achieving the highest precision level for the relayed stories.

In the previous chapter, I argued that integrating the four operational concepts (marketplace, trade, traders, and everyday peacebuilding) with the chronological conflict-related periods that affected the Ambonese community helps refine the study's focus without narrowing it down exclusively to a peace-and-conflict study. Such a combination helps expand the focus to a broader context of managing cultural diversity within a conflict-prone society. Meanwhile, the problem with interdisciplinary research is that a considerable amount of effort and resources are often required to obtain meaningful results. Such attempts are costly because it takes a considerable amount of time to make connect different disciplines due to their varying scientific languages.

Nevertheless, I argue that to understand the complexity of a society, especially the multilayered dimensions such as culturally diverse backgrounds, demographic issues, and security contexts, a single disciplinary approach would be insufficient; it would only capture a narrow and misrepresentative depiction of the society under study. A simple explanation for the above is that reality does not work in boxed disciplinary units. Therefore, during the fieldwork period, I found it important to see the bigger picture and the consequences of multidisciplinary issues over the course of the research period. This approach was chosen because the research topics involve temporal aspects of both the past and present time (Glass, 2015), and, more importantly, they also deal with the dynamics of a society (Braeuchler, 2015). For the purpose of this research, *place* was posited as the entry point.

4.3 Methods

Based on the information provided in the previous section, it is clear that the ethnographic approach was chosen to gather all-encompassing data for answering the research question. In line with the nature of qualitative studies, the goal of this research was not to obtain absolute correct accounts related to the market, trade, traders, and everyday peacebuilding but to follow the development of both the issues in line with the timeline of the conflict periods. In the process of approaching the data, I made sure to acknowledge the flaws of each individual and their collective memories in recalling the information, experiences, and moments from the past. To this end, data triangulation of six methods was used for the fieldwork (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1983; Creswell, 2007); this is elaborated on further in the following section.

4.3.1 Explorative studies. I was first introduced to the conflicts in Ambon when I started working for a Geneva-based international non-government organization in Jakarta in 2015. I worked on an Ambon-related project for two years, during which I had the opportunity to assist with the project preparation, participate in the activities carried out in Ambon, and help formulate the required documents as the outcome of the projects required working papers, a mediation toolkit, and a conflict roadmap. These professional experiences laid the foundation for my initial interest to research the roles of traditional markets in fostering sustainable peace in post-conflict Ambon. But my interest was focused on the question "how and where did peace happen?" instead of "when did the violence stop?"

The explorative study took place from August to September 2016. I first heard the phrase "peace started off at the market" during an informal conversation with peace activists. At first, I thought it was a joke because I could only associate the market with competition and conflict, not anything close to peace—or, at least, the definition of peace that involves the signing of a high-level agreement. I was struck by that sentence; first, because of curiosity, and, second, because the market has a personal meaning to me that I will explain further in the data collection section. Due to this curiosity and the sense of personal familiarity to the marketplace, I decided to focus on this topic for my PhD proposal. To decide which markets and areas to collect data from, I conducted explorative studies in two conflict-affected areas, namely, Poso in the Central Sulawesi Province and Ambon in the Maluku Province. During these initial studies, I mostly observed the area and the market and talked to people who have had direct and indirect experiences with conflicts and the market.

4.3.2 Fieldwork period. Different types of movements in times of conflict, resulting in forced migration, segregated neighborhoods, and the emergence of new social spaces and places, have contributed to shape the present society in Ambon City, Maluku Province. The field research was undertaken over a 10-month period, from July 2017 to March 2018 and June 2018 to July 2018, with additional data obtained in August 2019. The fieldwork comprised of a set of methods to retain all-encompassing data by employing in-depth interviews, participant observations, focus group discussions, field notes, and document collection in Ambon. For the document collection process, in addition to collecting on-field data, I made use of existing contacts with my former colleagues in Jakarta to obtain access to some materials related to Ambon. General participant observations were mostly conducted at Pasar Mardika (Mardika market), which was the main setting for this research. The Mardika market is a three-storey building with the ground floor designated for various commodities, the first floor for clothing stores, restaurants, and beauty salons, and the second floor for second-hand clothing stores and a mosque.

The observation setting was expanded to the traders' neighborhoods, farms and gardens, and worship places to get a broader perspective of their socio-cultural aspects. However, the challenge of conducting a research in an ever-transforming society is having to work with not only the current situation but also revisit the past and compare it with the present. This notion becomes more evident when dealing with societal transformation processes that include places and people along with the temporal aspect. Discussions on the importance of temporal contexts in ethnography and how to implement this approach have become prominent among ethnographers (Glass, 2015). In a classical ethnographic study, *time frame* has little to no influence to the subject of study. But to understand the post-conflict reconciliation process,

collective and personal memories play a role in comprehending the larger picture of the current situation (Viterna, 2009). Therefore, the use of historical evidence helps validate and contextualize the data collected in the present (Glass, 2015). Apart from collecting primary data through interviews and observations, a considerable amount of time was also spent obtaining pertinent documents and bibliographic materials on related topics.

The six different research methods that were employed during the fieldwork are illustrated in the table below.

Table 2 Name of the methods and types of data

No.	Name of the methods	Type of data collected	**Period of data collection**
1	Explorative study non-participant observations	Fieldnotes	August – September 2016
2	In-depth interviews	Interview recording and transcript	July 2017 – July 2018 and August 2019
	Informal and unstructured	Interview recording and transcript	
	Semi-structured	Interview recording and transcript	
3	Participant observation	Fieldnotes, pictures	July 2017 – July 2018 and August 2019
4	Focus group discussions (FGD)	FGD recording and transcript	November 2017 – March 2018 and August 2019
5	Fieldnotes	a. Reflexive and descriptive notes on observations	

		b. Reflexive and descriptive notes after interviews c. Places mapping d. Snowball sampling - actors network mapping e. Pictures and videos	July 2017 – July 2018 and August 2019
6	Historical critical approach and document collection		January 2016 – November 2019
	1. Online *www.youtube.com*	Video screenshot pictures, and audio transcript	January 2016 – November 2019
	2. Offline		
	Ambon		September 2016; July 2017 – March 2018; June – July 2018; August 2019
	Ambon City Bureau of Statistics	Ambon and Maluku Dalam Angka (Ambon in Figures, Maluku in Figures)	
	Municipal office of Trade and Industry	List of traders, maps of the market, municipal regulations on the market	
	Municipal office of Demographic and Population	General demographic figures of Ambon City	

	Municipal office of Religious Affairs	Religious-based demographic figures of Ambon City	
	Universitas Pattimura	Undergraduate and graduate thesis on conflict related issues	
	Jakarta		July – September 2016
	The Habibie Center Research Institute	Publications and data from National Violence Monitoring System	
	Library of Universitas Indonesia	Graduate theses related to Ambon	
	Library of Indonesian Institute of Sciences	Indonesian journal and research reports on Ambon and conflicts in Indonesia	

4.4 Sample Strategy

The fieldwork was difficult to conduct at the marketplace, particularly because of the highly distrustful post-conflict setting. Borrowing Lorraine Nencel's description of her own fieldwork in Lima, Peru, "It was physically exhausting, emotionally trying, and the women were not always cooperative" (Nencel, 2005, pp. 345–347). To some extent, I experienced a similar feeling during fieldwork, but it became better with time. Gray (2003) stated "[...] there is a myriad of unsettling obstacles, disappointments and surprises that can confront us in our research encounters in our

chosen location" (p. 6). Although my physical traits and identity are similar to the people of Ambon and I have had experiences working on conflict issues as well as in Ambon prior to this study, it turned out that I was not as prepared as I had thought. This emphasizes why understanding the challenges of entering a difficult field is a prominent part of fieldwork preparation.

The respondents for the interviews, focus group discussions, and observational study were selected using snowball sampling and random selection. Each of these approaches were situationally used depending on the necessity as well as the enabling factors on the ground such as the rapport they had established with other respondents, their closeness to other respondents—to smoothen the trust-building process before the interview—and the socio-economic as well as academic background of the respondents. For the snowball sampling approach, I made use of the network I had established during my previous peacebuilding project and expanded it to ensure that the respondents were from diverse backgrounds. To help such potential respondents, it was important to take into consideration their religious and ethnic backgrounds, gender, past and current occupations, domicile status, and conflict- and trade-related experiences.

On the other hand, the random selections were through accidental conversations both within and outside the market. These interactions amplified the respondent network, making it less concentrated on a single group, and ensured that as many different voices as possible were heard to answer the research question. To improve upon the quality of the interviews, several key informants were interviewed more than once. Additionally, my engagement with the community's events within and outside the market helped me build trust with my subjects, which, in turn, enabled me to meet with various people across different backgrounds that I would otherwise have not crossed paths with. They expressed

their trust and support in various ways—by inviting me to their hometown/village for their religious and cultural celebrations and, more importantly, to stay overnight at their house, for instance. All the interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in two languages—my native language *Bahasa Indonesia* and Ambonese Malay, which I learned during my intensive interactions with the people at the grassroots level.

Furthermore, following the logic of emic and etic perspectives, I tried to balance out the perspectives of those within the market, the immediate actors in trade, and outsiders working on the issue such as journalists, academics, government bodies, religious leaders, peace activists, and youth communities. In addition, by conducting the data analysis alongside the data collection process, I was able to reflexively reshape the configuration of the respondents from particular groups to obtain balanced data.

Table 3 Respondents

Respondent	Sex		Total
	M	F	
Muslim	38	24	**62**
Christian	18	15	**33**
Other	2	-	**2**
Total	**58**	**39**	**97**

The interview respondents were purposively selected using several criteria. First, the potential respondents were divided into three main groups: 1) high-level officials, including policy makers and implementers as well as religious leaders; 2) academics, activists, and members of non-governmental institutions directly working

on peacebuilding and social issues in Ambon City, such as lecturers at Institut Tifa Damai Ambon, Universitas Pattimura, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Ambon, and Universitas Kristen Ambon; and 3) internally displaced persons (IDPs), including market actors such as local sellers, buyers, and other workers (especially those with informal jobs; e.g., parking attendants (tukang parkir) and porters (kuli panggul), among others).

After mapping out the market area, I started the observational study (participant and non-participant) with the help of my research assistant. Our main aim was to gain information about the existing actors at the marketplace. At first, I focused on two actors—sellers and buyers—but as the observations progressed, I came to understand that market security officers (municipal police) play important roles in the production of space within the market, and, often, the interactions or, rather, negotiations between the sellers and these security officers involve conflict and violence. I also changed my strategy of approaching the market actors, especially for obtaining information from the buyers. There were a countless number of buyers, and they usually did not spend much time at a single stall; they tended to keep moving. It was indeed difficult to start a conversation with them while they were purchasing goods at the market. In addition, with the massive number of people walking around at the market, it was challenging to justify my decisions about which buyers to select as respondents. Therefore, instead of trying to find the right buyers to contact, I decided to assume that most of residents of Ambon were buyers as they would have visited the market for a range of reasons at least once. Instead of focusing on finding the right buyers, I looked for people who could share their conflict-time experiences, knowledge, networks, and, concurrently, would have visited and participated in economic exchanges at the market.

4.5 Data Collection

A personal experience laid the foundation for my interest in the traditional marketplace. I was born in a small village in the Central Java Province, and the only place to get fresh vegetables, household tools, and toys was the village market. My grandmother, who is now around 80 years old, has been a seller and broker for almost 65 years. Every time my mother took my siblings and me to the village market, I observed how my grandmother was persistent and highly motivated to get to the minibus by which farmers from the neighboring villages came to the market to sell their livestock, mostly chicken and duck. The competition was fierce; at least three to four brokers would try to get to the same minibus (they would tag along the body of the minibus and knock on it lightly, even before the minibus came to a stop) to offer the best price to the farmers. Despite the intense competition, the brokers are friends; at least, that's what my grandmother referred to them as. In the absence of a minibus, these traders usually sit down together, talk about their kids, grandchildren, and daily lives at their respective villages, or attend weddings and religious events together. Considering this anecdote, it is understandable why people who do not "live" at the market might simply define it as a cruel and competitive place. However, relationships are clearly defined differently among the people who "belong" to the market.

As a child, I observed the competition at the market and considered it to be a difficult and, at times, painful situation. But while I saw these brokers physically fight with each other to obtain the most chickens from the villagers, I certainly missed what happened in the absence of buyers. In such a complex situation, compared to that of a situation outside the market, I wondered how they continued to perform their various roles for years or even decades. What kind of lives do they lead at the market? What interactions take place among them that are so subtle that even

regular and frequent buyers might be unaware of them? What are the meanings behind their mundane yet intimate daily conversations during their spare time? Do these conversations connect them through the feeling of belonging and sameness? Or is it because they share the same goal of earning money through trading that makes them obey the unwritten convention of keeping peace at the market at all costs—is that why they don't yell at each other every other minute?

When I was 11 years old, my mother decided to become a credit giver at a central market in Ambarawa City, and I often helped her collect money by combing each and every alley of the market. I had to adapt with the physical condition of the market and deal with various kinds of smells, often unpleasant ones. I learned about the characteristics of the people at the market, the various stereotypes about sellers on the basis of the commodities they sold, as well as to sit still and observe the happenings in the crowded market. While the official fieldwork for this dissertation started in 2016, preceded by preliminary visits in Ambon and Poso, my actual understanding of the market began as early as my first visit to a traditional one. At this point, knowing my background may trigger questions about the degree of insider bias present in this study. While this may have affected the process, I also found opportunities that eventually influenced the way I collected the data. I will address such issues in a later section of this chapter.

To collect the data, I introduced myself to the respondents as a PhD student from the Netherlands conducting a research study. If needed, in some particular areas and occasions, I clarified that this research has no affiliation with my previous NGO projects in Ambon or any governmental initiatives to avoid bias. The degree of my identity revelation varied depending on the respondents and their follow-up questions. I believe that this was a critical moment for them to get to know me as researcher and for me to convince

them that my personal identity (as a female, Muslim, and Javanese) would not interfere with how I would treat the information they provided, especially with regard to the Muslim–Christian dynamics in Ambon. To ensure that the first contact would be smooth, and considering myself as an Indonesian, I gave presents to my first contact as well as interview respondents, which is discussed further in the "giving back" section. Meanwhile, in this section I present five methods that were employed to gather data during the fieldwork. The methods were not necessarily used in a chronological order to collect the data but were flexible and, sometimes, situational in nature to fit in with the fieldwork setting and meet the research objectives.

4.5.1 Interviews. First, I conducted semi-structured interviews with two groups comprising of individuals working at the local and provincial levels. These first-level interviews targeted prominent actors from religious institutions and community development organizations as well as academics, policy makers, and policy implementers to obtain encompassing data from various institutions that work on peace and conflict issues in Ambon City. The second group I interviewed consisted of market actors who willingly shared their insights, opinions, memories, and written materials related to their conflict and post-conflict experiences. Although I had initially planned to allocate a time slot for interviewing the IDPs, as the fieldwork progressed, I learned that the IDPs had mostly relocated to other areas, reintegrated with the local communities, or returned to their original neighborhoods. In addition, most of the IDPs camps had been officially closed down.

The semi-structured interviews primarily took place in the interviewee's natural setting. During the interview, I used differentiated topic guidelines for each group of stakeholders depending on their role in the society and their position on the

dynamics of market. This differentiation allowed me to explore specific themes and obtain deep and detailed coverage of particular issues for each group. For the first group, the interview scripts cover topics and questions related to professional background of the respondent, their job description, the current situation of Ambon, their thoughts about Mardika market, (if applicable) policies related to Mardika market, personal accounts related to the conflicts, peacebuilding efforts, the relationship between Muslims and Christians, and the roles of specific actors (religious, youth, customary leaders, for instance) during and in the aftermath of conflicts, Meanwhile, a relatively similar coverage also applies to the second respondents group. For the second group, the script became even less prescriptive as it served as a guideline, whereas other off-script topics were also mentioned, especially related to the activities conducted at the market at the given moment.

During the first three months, I was attached to my guidelines, but as the data provided by each respondent filled in the various gaps in my knowledge, I managed to sense the kind of information I would require to meet the goals of this research and highlighted the relevant questions for each respondent. Based on the initial interview scripts, I began by obtaining general information about what the traders sold and how they got their goods. Such simple questions got scaled up into more personal and in-depth ones. Once I seemed to have gained their trust, I moved on to the second group of questions, which were related to the research topic on the market and trade during the conflicts. The same process was followed for the respondents with higher educational backgrounds and actors outside of the market—I started by asking them general questions on the development of the situation in Ambon, then some personal, but general, questions to break the ice, and then moved on to the questions related to the research topic. Some of

the respondents, especially the traders and buyers, were interviewed more than once.

The second phase consisted of in-depth life history interviews. This approach allowed the respondent to narrate their life story in relation to the conflicts and, if relevant, their experiences related to the market or trade activities as well. This type of interview was conducted to help the respondents remember the conflict timeline and position themselves as well as other people in relation to it. For this interview, I did not follow a strict interview guide, and, instead, the respondents were given the liberty to narrate their side of the story as long as it was relevant to the main research topic (see Carling, 2012, for the Life History Calendar).

I came across the *life story* strategy when I was in the field and one of my respondents volunteered to tell me her life history before I started asking her any questions. I was aware that the downside of this type of interview was that it would take longer than a semi-structured interview; however, I found that the quality of the interview was significantly improved with this approach. Considering the cultural background of the Moluccans who praise oral storytelling as being a part of their tradition, allowing them to freely express themselves resulted in valuable data being obtained. Since then, I often started my in-depth interviews with "katong mau bacarita sa" (we are *just* going to *bacarita*/tell a story), "beta mau mangobrol tentang pasar" (I would like to have a conversation about the market), or "Mama/Ibu bisa bacarita kah tentang dulu waktu kerusuhan?" (Mama or Madam, could you tell us a story about what happened during the riots?). Other times, the respondents took the initiative to begin the interview by saying, "beta mau bastory dulu tentang beta pung hidop" (First, I would like to share about my life story) or simply "beta mau bacarita do" (I first want to share a story (from their perspective)).

Although I know many peace activists through the project I had previously worked on, all of whom possess extensive experience with peacebuilding and conflict intervention and prevention in Ambon, for this research, I tried to find and build respondent networks using a different entry point. In the meantime, I kept in touch with these former colleagues and consulted with them for my practical and substantial needs from time to time. For the data collection process, I had planned to interview these peace activists during the last stage of my fieldwork, after understanding the trend of the data being saturated. Interviews with the peace activists helped me confirm, revisit, and re-evaluate—i.e., triangulate—my reflexive understanding of the data collected and obtain further details on the information that was highly sensitive or vaguely described by the other respondent groups. I conducted intensive interviews with these former colleagues and related peace activists over the last two months of my fieldwork, in June and July 2018.

To strengthen the quality of the data, I also conducted interviews with the both communities in August 2019 as a final data confirmation attempt to triangulate the interpreted findings. The data confirmation phase was not only important to ensure that my interpretation of the data resonated with the respondents' initial intentions when they shared the information but also differentiates the quality of this fieldwork from other recent studies (Al Qurtuby, 2016; Krause, 2018) conducted in Ambon, which tended to rely on the authors' initial perceptions and interpretations of the fieldwork and writing process without clarifying the information with the studied community.

In general, each interview was its own story. Sometimes, I laughed with my respondents, and at other times, I cried listening to their answers. I even found myself sitting in silence on a small bench next to a seller, with a tray full of vegetables in front of me. When I interviewed one of the elites in Ambon, the interview

began in a formal manner, but once an interpersonal connection was established, most of the stories were shared with laughter. These three emotional expressions—tears, laughter, and silence—often highlighted the quality of my data and require conviviality between the respondents and me. A total of 97 respondents were identified during the in-depth interviews. Most of the interviews conducted were one-on-one, but there were also a number of interviews which involved the presence of my research assistant. The implications of this will be discussed in a later section.

4.5.2 Observation. To capture the dynamics of the market, I switched between the roles of a (i) full observer, (ii) market actor, and (iii) participant observer during the observational study. Being a full observer involved visiting the market and walking through every alley to observe the selling and buying processes as a third-person outsider. This role helped me to map out and gain a general understanding of the research setting. It took me almost four months to get familiar with most of the marketplace alleyways. Second, for the market actor role, I visited the Mardika market as a (real) buyer to fulfil my daily shopping needs. I did this purposively to get a better overview of the logical thought processes of the buyers at the market. Thus, I entered the market from various points, bought different kinds of commodities, exited the market from different sides each time, and used different modes of transportation (motorcycle taxi, minibus, pedicab, or on foot).

Third, as a participant observer, I usually helped traders sell their goods and allowed other people to recognize me as an outsider. Most of the other sellers realized that I was an outsider, and, sometimes, buyers noticed this as well, primarily due to my physical trait of having lighter skin than that of most Ambonese people. Further, the Javanese (Malay) contour of my face was quite distinguishable in broad daylight at the market. The decision to

let people recognize that I was conducting research on the market was aimed at following the idea of an ethnographer being "a fly on the wall." This approach aided the research in two ways. By being involved in the selling process and fully participating in the respondents' activities, I experienced the challenges faced by sellers at the market firsthand, which increased my degree of understanding of the community under study. Further, as the people surrounding the trade stall became familiar with my presence, they no longer felt uncomfortable with being observed on a daily basis.

Meanwhile, through the role of an active buyer, I could see how the physical condition and arrangement of the market contributes to a user's behavior Mardika market is known for its unpleasant state, especially during and after rain showers, as the existing potholes create puddles and one would need to avoid these as well as cars, other buyers, sellers, etc. when walking around, making the situation chaotic. Choosing which sellers to buy products from is more of a random act, independent of any identifying marks or established relationships with the traders, albeit with some exceptions. As a participant observer, I tried to define the interactions between the sellers and buyers among sellers with similar ethno-religious backgrounds, sellers with different ethno-religious backgrounds, and other market actors. To distinguish sellers and buyers from different backgrounds, I made use of accumulated knowledge that I gained from the field in distinguishing their physical appearance and clothing choice, as well as spoken language as previously discussed. The participative observation comprised of activities within and outside the market that were relevant to my research topic, and such experiences could be directly transferred in the form of field notes.

I attended meetings, rallies, and special events as well as religious and customary events to observe people's behavior in their natural milieus. During my stay there, I participated in over 30 formal and semi-formal events as well as other informal events, including

academic events at local universities, religious events, social events, institutional events, gatherings, general observations, and more. The complete list of the observed activities can be found below. Regarding the religious events, I was invited to attend two formal events held by the mayor and vice-mayor's office and two informal events at respondents' villages during the Christmas and Eid ul-Fitr celebrations. The Ambonese people are stereotypically known to be humble, chatty, and interested in *bacarita* (sharing stories); I found this to be true for the most part. During my fieldwork, I got involved in countless conversations with minibus drivers and other passengers, resulting in exchanges of information. Such small talk and informal conversations sometimes triggered other questions that allowed me to enhance my understanding of the Ambonese society and obtain further data. Most of my observations were documented in the form of notes, pictures, and videos; the notes were reflexive in nature.

Some of the event invitations I obtained were due to my knowledge on "How to pursue high degrees abroad" and "How to win scholarships abroad." This is because, in 2016, I published a *Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian language) book with tips and tricks to win scholarships in Indonesia and abroad. This book eventually helped me open many doors at the national and local levels as I was featured in several national printed newspapers such as Kompas, Koran Tempo, and Femina Magazine as well as various online news portals. This exposure helped me build my personal, educational, and professional credentials, especially during the fieldwork. People could easily check the Internet for information about me, and through word of mouth, my presence in Ambon to conduct extensive research resulted in many institutions, organizations, and communities inviting me to share my experiences. Although this might sound irrelevant to my research foci, such activities often became a gateway to the serendipities of ethnography. I visited

places that I initially did not consider as relevant to my research, but they turned out to greatly contribute to my understanding of the topic, especially of the interreligious relationships in Ambon. I branched out the network of actors by meeting people with various backgrounds compared to what I had anticipated before the fieldwork began.

Table 4 Participant observation during fieldwork

No.	Event	Time sampling	Location
1	Invited to join workshop on the gender dimension of social conflicts, armed violence and peacebuilding, organized by Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta and The Graduate Institute, Geneva	October 2017	Ambon City
2	Invited by sellers to stay overnight at Lilibooi village – a Christian area – to follow the selling activities from their home to the market	November 2017	Central Maluku Regency
3	Joined the delegation of Rohingya and Rakhine State during their visit to Ambon. The trip was organized by Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and Institut Tifa Damai Maluku	December 2017	Ambon City and Central Maluku Regency
4	Participated in the Christmas celebration at the residence of Mayor of Ambon	December 2017	Ambon City
5	Staying at Lilibooi village to join the second day Christmas celebration	December 2017	Ambon City
6	Attended a Muslim funeral at the 'Gaza strip' area – Air Salobar (Pohon Mangga)	January 2018	Ambon City

7	Joined an audience with the Vice Mayor of Ambon with the delegation of Pattani (South Thailand conflicting area) discussing the Muslim-Christian relations in the post-conflict Ambon, organized by The Habibie Center Jakarta and Lembaga Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak (LAPAN – Institute of women and children empowerment)	January 2018	Ambon City
8	Took part in the opening ceremony of the International Youth Camp on Counter Violence Extremism, funded by United Nation Development Programme and IAIN Ambon, at the residence of the Vice Governor of Maluku Province	January 2018	Ambon City
9	Joined and followed a female Muslim trader on her journey from home (Keranjang village) to the market	January 2018	Ambon City
10	Invited to the launching of a coffee kiosk owned by a young Butonese trader at the Mardika market	February 2018	Ambon City
11	Participated in the interreligious march as part of the Rohingya and Rakhine State delegation visit to Ambon. This activity was followed by a panel discussion involving Muslim and Christian religious leaders from Talake predominantly Muslim village and Waringin predominantly Christian village	February 2018	Ambon City

12	Participated in an audience with the King of Hila discussing the Muslim-Christian relations prior to the conflicts especially in Hila Negeri, a predominantly Muslim village which used to be a religiously mixed village on Ambon	February 2018	Central Maluku Regency
13	Participated in an audience discussing the commodities distribution strategies during the conflicts with the head of the Industry and Trade Official Office of Maluku Province	February 2018	Ambon City
14	Invited by the Mayor of Ambon to join the gathering of iftar (during the fasting month of Ramadhan), with various stakeholders in Ambon	June 2018	Ambon City
15	Invited to the Eid-ul Fitri Celebration at the residence of the Vice Mayor of Ambon	June 2018	Ambon City
16	Invited to join the celebration of Eid-ul Fitri on the neighboring island of Haruku island, stayed overnight in the village	June 2018	Ambon City
17	Invited to attend the National Gathering: Cultivating Peace, Lessons Learned from Conflict Resolution and Peace in the Maluku and the North Maluku Province, held in Jakarta	July 2018	Ambon City

4.5.3 Focus group discussion (FGD). As part of the fieldwork, I organized five focus group discussions (FGD) that focused on the market and post-conflict society. The FGD was organized on the topic of the current interreligious relations on Ambon Island. The FGD script outlined general topic to cover but did not contain rigid

questions to follow. To start the discussion, I usually introduced myself, the reasons why I came to Ambon, and what I would be interested to discuss with the participants. The introduction then followed by general questions related to the lives after conflicts, segregation, historical accounts related to conflicts, then focused on questions related to the roles of the market before, during, and after the conflicts. In a whole, the FGD questions include 1) sequencing from general to specific questions, 2) following the flow with open-ended questions, 3) focusing on the personal experiences of the participants as well as secondary stories they acquired from others.

The first focus group consisted of young male Butonese sellers of the night market at Mardika, and the discussion was held in one of the coffee houses in Ambon City. The second and third FGDs included students from Universitas Pattimura, Ambon, who were also my students at the French Corner; I occasionally participated in their activities during my stay in Ambon. At the time of the FGDs, I had known these students for almost six months, and, therefore, their degree of trust was arguably high to enable them to talk about sensitive issues with me. One group consisted of Christian students from the Ambon islands and other Moluccan islands. The other group consisted of Muslim students from the Ambon islands and second-generation migrants originally from outside the Moluccas, such as Buton Island, Bugis and the North Sumatra Province. The participants in these groups were 18–24 years old and were chosen because they frequently visited the Mardika Market as buyers, minibus passengers, or speedboat passengers (the central minibus terminal and speedboat port are integrated within the market area). Hence, they represented the post-conflict generation of frequent market visitors.

The fourth FGD was organized as part of the International Youth Camp to counter violent extremism, and students and youth from all over Indonesia were invited. I was given the opportunity

to co-chair the focus group and discuss the roles of market in preventing violent extremism while considering previous conflict experiences and peacebuilding efforts that have taken place at the market. For this FGD, I invited two female Christian sellers and one Muslim seller to share their conflict-related experiences with the Youth Camp participants.

An FGD was also organized to validate and confirm the analyzed data during the last stage of the data analysis process in August 2019. This FGD was held in an informal manner, consisting of one group of Muslims. The data confirmation for the Christian side was done through in-depth interviews instead of an FGD due to a limitation of resources and time. Further, the Muslims were found to have limited and vague knowledge on the temporary markets as most of them were located in the Christian areas; therefore, the FGD was aimed at obtaining a general impression of the situation in Ambon during the conflict periods from the Muslim perspective.

Table 5 Focus Group Discussion

No.	Participants	Time sampling	Location
Data collection			
1	Young male Butonese sellers	December 2017	Ambon City
2	Muslim students FGD	January 2018	Ambon City
3	Christian students FGD	January 2018	Ambon City
4	Youth delegation and invited three market actors (one Muslim merchant and two Christian sellers) FGD	January 2018	Ambon City
Data confirmation			
5	Butonese youth, experienced conflicts	August 2019	Ambon City

4.5.4 Field notes. Apart from the aforementioned set of roles that enabled me to observe the internal dynamics of the market, I also participated in various activities surrounding Ambon Island, as listed below. Starting from the second month, I focused on the roles of market actors for fostering sustainable peace in a post-conflict society, and I attempted to map the physical form of the market. The broad mapping of the market helped me acquire a sense of the place and spread of the various commodities, ethnic groups, and actors. In addition, the mapping process was helpful for obtaining an understanding of the flow of buyers entering and leaving the market via various transportation modes since the Mardika market is integrated with a local minibus terminal (short distance bus) as well as a speedboat port. During these observations, I was able to interact with sellers who were curious about what I was doing with my phone camera and paper notebook while drawing the map. Some of them agreed to be contacted later and eventually became my interviewees.

The mapping process was prolonged due to the uncertainty about the exact border and size of Mardika Market because it is located next to the Batu Merah Market, Old Market (Pasar Lama), and fruit market/Losari Market. Subsequently, I obtained the official building plan of the market from its head; however, the document only displayed the market plan and not the actual market condition. Therefore, to emulate the closest depiction of the actual condition of the market, I needed to adjust the map by adding the unregulated/unregistered seller areas occupying most of the market's outer layer as well as narrow alleys within the market building during operational hours.

This long list of activities and events were meant to gain exposure to the field and get involved in various engagements with diverse communities. These rich encounters helped shape my understanding of the community. I also aim to give my readers a

way to judge the level of closeness and trust that I managed to build among the community members during the fieldwork periods. I believe that this list is important to transparently judge the quality of the fieldwork. Unfortunately, such a list is hardly found in many qualitative studies on Indonesia in general, let alone those specific to conflict-affected settings. During each of the events and activities, I took notes about my general impression and interesting new facts as well as some pictures.

Table 6 Fieldnotes

No.	Event	Time sampling	location
1	General market observation by walking around the market and observing activities at the market	a. July 2017 – March 2018 b. June 2018 – July 2018 c. August 2019	Mardika Market
2	General observation on the Ambon City situation by taking various types and routes of public transportation, including mini bus, motorcycle taxi, pedicab taxi, or walking around the city and outside the city	a. July 2017 – March 2018 b. June 2018 – July 2018 c. August 2019	Ambon City and Central Maluku Regency
3	General observation at diverse coffeeshops in Ambon City, both modern and traditional, high-end and budget cafes that are located in the Muslim, Christian and mixed areas	a. July 2017 – March 2018 b. June 2018 – July 2018 c. August 2019	Ambon City

4	General observation on the areas surrounding the boarding house I was staying. The first period of my fieldwork (July 2017 – March 2018), I stayed in a predominantly Christian area in the Mardika administration, 10 minutes walking distance to the Mardika Market. The second period of my fieldwork (June – July 2018), I stayed in a Muslim area in Kebun Cengkeh, located quite far from the Mardika Market that I had to take the mini bus for 15-30 minutes to get to the market, depending on the traffic situation. In August 2019, I came to Ambon for data confirmation, I stayed in a predominantly Muslim area called Waihaong in downtown of Ambon City	a. July 2017 – March 2018 b. June 2018 – July 2018 c. August 2019	Ambon City
5	Participated in the Indonesia Independence Ceremony	August 2017	Toisapu landfills
6	Attended Mandarin language course at Universitas Pattimura	September – December 2017	Universitas Pattimura
7	Invited to teach English for primary and secondary pupils at Waringin village, a predominantly Christian area	September 2017	Waringin village, Ambon City
8	Invited to share experience of pursuing study abroad at Student French Corner	October 2017	Universitas Pattimura
9	Occasionally taught French language to students at Student French Corner	October 2017	Universitas Pattimura

10	Invited to join a dissemination seminar on public service organized by Ombudsman Maluku Province	October 2017	Ambon City
11	Invited to share experience on how to get scholarship to study abroad at State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN Ambon), Air Kuning	October 2017	Ambon City
12	Invited to share experience of pursuing study abroad at Catholic Xaverius High School – SMA Xaverius Ambon	November 2017	Ambon City
13	Invited to share experience on how to get scholarship to study abroad at the annual Education Expo held at Universitas Pattimura	November 2017	Ambon City
14	Invited to share experience of pursuing study abroad to kindergarten teachers as part of educational capacity building workshop organized by HekaLeka local NGO held on Saparua Island	November 2017	Ambon City
15	Invited to share experience of pursuing study abroad as part of the English Camp organized by intervillage Muslim youth community, held in Keranjang Village	December 2017	Ambon City
16	Observed a dissemination meeting involving the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Trade Official Office of Maluku Province, Indonesian	January 2018	Mardika Market, Ambon City

	Bureau of Logistics, and sellers at Mardika Market, held at the Mardika Market		
17	Invited to share educational and professional experience of working in conflict-related issues at Youth Coalition for Sustainable Peace, organized by Non-Violence Study Circle and held in Negeri Hitu, a predominantly Muslim *negeri*	January 2018	Negeri Hitu, Central Maluku Regency
18	Invited to share experience of pursuing study abroad at College of Health Sciences Maluku Husada in Kebun Cengkeh, a predominantly Muslim area	January 2018	Ambon City
19	Helped examine students for a French exam at Universitas Pattimura, followed with a small gathering with students of French Corner	January 2018	Universitas Pattimura
20	Attended the Muslim boys mass circumcision in Air Ali (Sunatan Massal), a predominantly Muslim and migrant area	February 2018	Ambon City
21	Joined the discussion between academics from Faculty of Agriculture Universitas Pattimura, French corner, and the owner of Ambon City Hotel to discuss about potential partnership	February 2018	Ambon City
22	Participated in the first National Music Conference held in Ambon	March 2018	Ambon City

23	Observed a match screening of World Cup match in front of my boarding house in Kebun Cengkeh	July 2018	Ambon City
24	Invited to share experience of studying abroad and teach basic French during annual Education Expo	August 2019	Universitas Pattimura

4.5.5. Historical and literature review. The last method of data collection involved reviewing pertinent documents and bibliographic materials about the conflict and post-conflict scenarios, actors, population, census data, segregated communities, IDPs conflict transformation process, transitional justice, peace building, and peace efforts to elaborate on the historical context, theoretical framework, fieldwork findings, and other additional data to support this study. To do so, I spent a considerable amount of time at the National Bureau of Statistics in Ambon, university libraries (Universitas Pattimura and Universitas Indonesia), and NGO offices in Jakarta and Ambon.

I started by searching for relevant literature on online database such as Google Scholar and Web of Science. I used basic keywords in three different languages: English (market), Indonesian (pasar), and French (marché). To narrow down the search results, I added keywords such as "traditional market," "wet market," "open air market," "post-conflict," "conflict areas," and "peacebuilding." A number of keywords such as "trade," "exchange," and "small-scale trader," were prominent in the collected data along with specific phrases such as "borderland trade," "economic exchange during conflict," "échange économique," "trading network," and "everyday peacebuilding." In addition to focusing on these keywords, I also approached the literature based on the authorship. I gathered

some prominent names of researchers and further researched their contributions to the marketplace, economies of peace, space, identity, and (everyday) peacebuilding fields. I developed an interest in the production of space theory given by Henri Lefebvre, the socio-cultural dimensions of the marketplace given by Karl Polanyi, the traders' dilemma by Hans-Dieter Evers, and everyday peacebuilding by Mac Ginty and Oliver Richmond, among others. This inclination towards the idea of space, especially economic space combined with the socio-cultural aspects of society, helped me understand the market's dynamics. I also narrowed down the focus of the literature to specific geo-political areas such as Southeast Asia, Indonesia, Ambon, and Maluku.

During the process of collecting literature, I tried to focus more on local Indonesians in general or Moluccan and Ambonese academics working on relevant issues and not only praise the prominent global scholars who happened to, for a number of reasons, have an interest in Indonesia. I believe that local scholars, regardless of their limitations in the quantity of research produced and comparatively less sophisticated methodology employed, contribute to enhancing the discussions on the research problems. My critique on the global knowledge production of studies on Indonesia, especially by international scholars, will be elaborated on further in a later section of this chapter.

When shaping the research problem, I tried to make sure that the topic had not already been studied by international or local academics. To do so, I asked the local academics at least three basic questions to ensure that my research would not be redundant: "Could you tell me about the roles of market in times of conflict? Has it changed now?" "Was peace established at the market?" "Can the market become a parameter for the broader situational context in Ambon and Maluku?" As these local academics not only conduct their own research but are also exposed to the everyday realities in

the area, they are trained and able to observe various phenomena through academic lenses and are constantly challenged by various research topics as they supervise a number of undergraduate and graduate students on issues related to Ambon and Maluku. Finding out that the issue focused on for this research was still a matter of contention for them and the well-known anecdote "peace started at the market" had never been examined at the grassroots level gave me the certainty that this research is required for academic purposes as well as to help the Ambonese community understand their everyday issues.

4.6 Data Analysis

Over the course of the research period, it was apparent that the process of analyzing data in ethnographic research does not necessarily start as soon as the data has been gathered. Instead, the data analysis was a fluid process in this study and needed to be carried out throughout the fieldwork period and the writing process (see Saldaña, 2016). Furthermore, the ever-changing situation in the field inevitably re-shaped the initial research purpose and methods as well as the data collection process in general. The process of refining the research topic also included a shift in the research focus, going from a market-specific focus to understanding the differentiation of market and trade. This expansion was due to the reflexive data collection process in the field. With further information gathered and long periods of time spent in the field, I could prioritize the relevant aspects of the study instead of following the initial methodology given in the research proposal. It became clear that the purpose of this research was to study the factors underlying the heterogeneous roles of the marketplace and trade activities. I regard these roles as being embedded in the context of everyday peacebuilding.

The data analysis process was closely linked to the data collection as both these processes aim to find recognizable patterns that would lead to a better understanding of the issues and help answer the research question. Stenner (2014) stated that "we seek patterns as somewhat stable indicators of humans' ways of living and working to render the world more comprehensible, predictable and tractable" (as cited in Saldaña, 2016, p. 143). To find such patterns during the fieldwork, an interpretative approach was employed to analyze the data. By following Corbin and Strauss' (2008) analytical tools, I made use of several strategies for the data analysis process. During the data collection, I maintained my objectivity by constantly questioning the phenomena observed in the field by asking questions of why and how things took place, in addition to questions of what, who, and where. The answers to these questions often led me to understand the explicit and implicit indications of the data. For example, when people asked me "where do you stay here in Ambon?" I presumed that the question was related to the geographical location. This was asked almost every time I met a new person, and the response to my answer often included a shocked facial expression. Through the interviews conducted later on, I discovered that, in Ambon, asking where people stay or live is a way of enquiring about their religion; i.e., in Ambon, geographical space is still strongly associated with a particular religious belief.

The second analysis tool involved constantly making comparisons. The nature of this research was to achieve a balance of information obtained from the Muslim and Christian sides, ranging from elite members to the grassroots community members. Therefore, the respondents chosen and order of the interview periods was crucial to take into consideration during the fieldwork. In addition, cross-checking information on topics similar to those addressed by each target group was required to

recognize the data patterns. I also paid special attention to the language and words commonly used among the Ambonese in general. I analyzed the associations between specific words and ethno-religious backgrounds as well as the prosodic aspects of the utterance, such as the intonation, stress, tone, and rhythm. In addition, a number of word constructions attributed to local expressions were also employed to understand the socio-cultural and historical background of the Ambonese society. In a later stage of my fieldwork, I found that these two linguistic aspects mark the shift of ethno-religious relations and spatial identifications and are used to identify in-group and out-group boundaries.

I placed an emphasis on analyzing the words spoken by respondents during the interviews, FGD, and observational study. This rather alternative lens guided my understanding of the emic perspective with regard to their conflict- and peace-related experiences. Repeated words that referred to similar contexts were gathered to reveal a possible hidden discourse among the members of the society. These words were analyzed by comparing them with the established knowledge present in the existing literature and with the context of their opposite. The latter analytical tool is rooted in Derrida's broad sense concept of deconstruction (Derrida & Bass, 2001), which is also often used in ethnographic strategies (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). By deconstructing different ideas, such as the word "peace," I began to understand what it meant to most of the respondents. First, they referred to peace as the absence of the sound of conflicts. Second, they referred to peace by providing opposing accounts about the restrictions that took place because of the conflicts. For example, the conflicts separated them from their religious opponents, so peace was understood as a situation in which both the religious communities find a way to meet. This enabled the positing of the roles of the marketplace and borderline trade points in the peacebuilding axiom.

This study also succeeded in revealing the slow temporality of the conflict-related periods and further connecting it with the everyday economic exchanges among the communities. The approach taken to come up with a transformation period was rooted in the act of deconstructing the reality of conflict through the discourses of the respondents and their reactions to them as the first step of deconstruction is to find and overturn the oppositions to the discourse. Similar to the process of understanding a respondent's idea of peace, I identified the characteristics of the transformation periods by opposing them with the conflict periods. Starting with a general misconception of the situation of conflict areas, I questioned the happenings in society during the *absence* of violence. The transformation period was determined based on the grassroot-level narratives on the basis of survival. *Su aman-aman* was a key term that liberated people to access borderline areas in an organic manner without requiring state or military intervention; this is elaborated on further in Chapter 7. In addition, by separating the conflict and transformation periods, this study was directed towards the *longue durée* approach for analyzing the post-conflict society. Upon analyzing all the information, I reviewed the findings again, especially the main argument related to the periodization of conflict and the maps and schemes of the local Muslim and Christian Ambonese communities through data confirmation processes. The data confirmation processes were virtually conducted through email and phone call as well as by revisiting the field to conduct FGDs and interviews.

There are at least three types of coding that help analyze data: selective coding, open coding, and axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Selective coding is aimed at selecting the core category in relation to other categories to validate and develop a storyline that considers all the relationships among the selected categories. Open coding is used to find conceptual categories in the data, whereas

axial coding helps conceptualize and account for the relationships at a higher level of abstraction.

The open coding process started off during the fieldwork period and continued throughout the data analysis stage. For example, when I began to recognize the folk terms used to refer certain acts in relation to conflict periods, I took note of such folk terms in my notebook. As it was an initial attempt without having enough clue of what those words would signify, I kept on trying to use the words interchangeable with its words in Indonesian language. For example, when I started to notice people referred the period before the conflict as *waktu masih aman (sebelum kerusuhan)* (lit. when it was still safe, before the riots), as well as when they said *su aman-aman* when explaining the period to conduct economic exchanges during the conflicts. From the initial categorization acquired by observing patterns during the fieldwork as well as transcribing the interviews, I continued with the second stage of coding, the axial coding. This stage of coding aims to find relationships among the open codes, for example, the *waktu masih aman (sebelum kerusuhan)* term was used as a sequential marker which might have strong relation with the term *su aman-aman*. In the axial coding, I tried to find the pattern where both terms show temporal indication in the periodization of the conflicts.

While employing the selective coding process, I focused on dividing the information based on the four concepts relevant to this research: market, trade, traders, and everyday peacebuilding. Considering that most of the in-depth interviews did not follow a specific interview guide, the four concepts became the core categories to explain the storyline established using the data collected in the field based on the respondents' individual accounts. The same held true for categorizing the data from the field notes. For the final display of the collected data, the dominant patterns that emerged from the data were focused on; as a token of

ethnographic research, such patterns also indicate data saturation. As this research was focused on creating a balance between etic and emic views, I tried to examine patterns that were found not only in the data gathered but also in the stories narrated by the respondents in their own words.

Last, the use of direct quotations from the interview respondents better illustrated the discussed subject and strengthened the reliability of the data. The quotations were translated to English. To determine the four periods, (1) *waktu masih aman (sebelum kerusuhan),* (2) *panas-panas,* (3) *su aman-aman,* and (4) *su-aman*—were presented in both Indonesian and English in the original transcript. I used common-sense knowledge and previously established theories to find plausible inconsistencies and contradictions among the respondents' answers (for more, see Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). In doing so, I devoted the first step of the data analysis process to discerning some unusual yet repeated "folk" terms that had been spontaneously used by the respondents to derive potential patterns. I found that proficiency in the local language included understanding its prosodic aspects such as the intonation, tone, and use of specific words, are integral for qualitative studies, especially those with an ethnographic approach. As part of the data analysis process, the structure of local language—in this case, the Ambonese Malay or Melayu Ambong (van Minde, 1997; van Minde & Tjia, 2002)—became a tool to break down the meaning behind the repeated patterns of the identified folk terms.

4.7 Research Quality Indicators

In this section, I explore the challenges and strengths of using an ethnographic research method for this dissertation. Considering that my research was conducted in conflict-prone areas, especially a post-conflict society, I am aware that information bias, strong

subjectivity, collective memory, conflict narratives, and residual trauma from past events can easily disrupt the replicability of the data due to the swift transformation of this kind of society.

To attain a high degree of credibility, the validity of this research was measured using practical methods prior to, during, and post the fieldwork. I agree with Van Voorst's (2014) argument on her decision to adapt to the fieldwork flow in a slum area riverbank in Jakarta. In her dissertation, she acknowledged the dynamics of the data collection process and that "validation of this type of research should not be 'proven' by acting as if the results accord with the initial research design, but rather validation is established by openness about the ways in which the research design was theoretically, conceptually and practically prepared and then later adapted to reality in the field" (p. 61).

As previously mentioned, I used a balanced approach of deductive and inductive reasoning to support the exploratory and explanatory parts of my research. This means that to replicate and reproduce similar and accurate findings, I used the same theories or concepts, i.e., marketplace, trade, traders and everyday peacebuilding, to help guide the deductive reasoning process. In the meantime, data triangulation was an important tool to combine the various types of data obtained from the primary research, secondary research, observational study, field notes, and focus group discussions. In ethnographic research, the data interpretation and analysis processes need to be conformed back to the respondents to match both understandings as discussed previously in the data analysis section.

In line with the interchangeable use of deductive and inductive reasoning to guide the data collection, the process also tended to be progressive. It is commonly known that ethnographers learn their research while conducting their *research* (Hammersley & Atkinson,

1983). While trying to immerse myself in the flow of the fieldwork, I constantly found my research problem developing, shifting, and transforming along the way. I came to Ambon with a semi-prepared set of interview guidelines that focused on the roles of traditional markets in mitigating conflicts and promoting sustainable peace in post-conflict Ambon. However, over the course of the fieldwork period, the interviews developed further and progressed in different directions.

In terms of the research topic, I usually did not completely reveal the aims of my research until the very end of the interview. Once the respondent shared information that eventually answered my research question, I conveyed that I was looking for that specific information and let them own the joy of discovery. I did this to mitigate the possibility of data affirmation bias as stating that my research aimed to understand the traditional marketplace's roles in fostering sustainable peace in Ambon may have resulted in the respondents trying to modify their answers in favor of the research topic. This marked a new phase of my fieldwork.

When I began the research, I was not aware that the market's roles are not only contextually strong but also time sensitive. This means that a market's dynamics in a conflict-prone society tends to differ depending on the conflict-related period. Incorporating this time dimension resulted in a re-adjustment of my initial research objectives. By focusing on how market as a common space mitigates conflict and promotes peace in the post-conflict society, the current research examined the fluidity of the market's dynamics in the society, considering the conditions prior to the conflicts, during the conflicts, during the transformation period, and post the conflicts. Thus, the research no longer focused solely on the positive roles of the market but considered the situation through impartial lenses to examine the various mechanisms, i.e., the organic, government-led,

security-led, and hybrid institutional arrangements, that, in turn, helped re-shape the Ambonese society in a given period.

Regarding the reliability of the data, my close tie with the community can be examined through different occasions. For example, I was invited to stay at both the Christian as well as Muslim sellers' houses. For the Ambonese people, inviting others to stay in their village signifies the formation of a strong bond and closeness, thereby establishing trust. My close ties to the Christian sellers were built on social capital that had already been established between them and one of my Christian respondents. The trust was transmitted, enabling them to accept me into their community.

4.8 Reflections on the Research Methods

4.8.1 Secondhand data. My previous two-year work experience in Ambon did not prevent me from wondering whether this area was indeed safe. When my fieldwork began, the local people told me to avoid various activities and areas and to refrain from doing anything on my own, especially going to the market. These precautions also included the period within which I could visit the market or simply step outside; they told me that 9 pm was the limit. I believe it closely related to the fact that I was new to the area and did not look like an Ambonese.

In the first month of the fieldwork period, I decided to hire a research assistant—a male Muslim assistant called Dirman (pseudo name). His role as a research assistant was significant for gaining access to the community as my position as outsider in Ambon was bridged by his insider position within the society. For practical and security purposes, Dirman accompanied me throughout the first three months of observations and interviews and acted as my guardian when I needed to go to the market in the late evening or early morning hours. Entering the fourth month of fieldwork

period, I was satisfied with the quality and potential of the network that the two of us had built. Therefore, I decided not to prolong the assistantship and used the existing network to collect data alongside participating in local events to find potential respondents. Along the way, I was accompanied by a local Muslim male, Hadar (pseudo name), who became both the source person and gatekeeper. It was my former research assistant who introduced me to Hadar and provided access to the third ethnic group that I wanted to study—the Butonese traders.

Other reasons for deciding not to prolong the assistantship were related to the substance of the research. With the presence of the research assistant, I found that the collected data was secondhand and was filtered twice or even thrice: first, through the perspective of my research assistant, who was a native of the area; second, through the viewpoints of my respondents, who may have behaved differently (positively and negatively) due to the presence of my assistant; and third, through my own limitations in navigating the situation to ask the right questions when my assistant was present. For example, conducting deep and emotional interviews and building interpersonal connectedness to obtain reliable and valid data from my respondents became limited, to a certain extent, due to the presence of a third person. Therefore, I would argue that hiring a research assistant had two impacts: a positive impact in extending their social capital and easing the trust-building process with the respondents, and a negative impact due to the potential biases added to the data collection process.

4.8.2 Tak kenal maka tak sayang. An old saying in Bahasa Indonesia, "tak kenal maka tak sayang," which means "unknown makes unloved," is a useful reminder about the importance of building and maintaining contacts during fieldwork to access valuable insights. Through the interviews and informal chats

with sellers and buyers, I was able to build a rapport with them to facilitate interactions during my future visits; some of these people added me on Facebook and followed me on Instagram, in addition to asking for my phone number. I believe that the real rapport construction occurred through the repeated visits to their stalls and acknowledgment of their presence by greeting them and purchasing their goods as well as checking their updates on social medias. At times, before I asked any questions or started a conversation with them, they came up with a series of questions about both my personal and professional lives. Some of the frequent questions were "dari mana asalnya?" (where are you originally from?), "tinggal di mana di Ambon?" (where do you live here in Ambon?), "biking apa?" (what are you doing?[4]), and "kuliah di mana?" (where do you study?") as well as personal questions such as "are you married?". During the first month of the fieldwork, a respondent even asked me to send him a picture of my national identity card. I sent it to him and asked why he needed it, to which he simply said that he was curious. At such moments, I understood the importance of carefully revealing my identity without creating any potential disruptions in the trust-building process.

When I started my fieldwork in Ambon and told people that I would be collecting data through interviews with both the Muslim and Christian communities, most of the Muslim people I spoke to were skeptical of the idea. They told me that I would not get genuine answers from their Christian counterparts as they would only convey good things and avoid speaking about sensitive issues related to the Muslim people. It did indeed take longer to establish contacts and connections with the Christian communities. My identity as a Muslim but without a hijab covering seemed to help me build trust with them, enabling them to open up during our

[4] In the context of the interview setting, the question "biking apa?" has at least two meanings: "What are you doing here?" and "What is the purpose of this interview?"

conversations. This was especially so after they got to know that I am originally from Java. They seemed to treat me in a different but positive way. Initially, this situation made me uncomfortable, but I tried to make use of this aspect to smoothen the research process and subtly encourage them to be open with their answers.

I also tried to address sensitive issues in a careful manner and got closer to them by staying overnight at their village. Until this point, I believed that being considered as out-group member of their community would make them more willing to share stories with me than with the Ambonese Muslim people, for instance. Prior to arriving in Ambon, I thought that my identity and physical appearance as a Javanese would cause negative sentiments because the jihadists were known to originally come from Java. However, I have never encountered people who associate my ethnic background with militias. To my surprise, the Ambonese community had a great sense of non-generalization and non-stigmatization, despite the incidents that occurred in the past, and I did not experience any negatively biased treatment during my time there.

4.8.3 "Now, here, this, and that" indexicality in fieldwork. Discussions on the complexity and fluidity of positionality in the field, especially in migration research, have been brought up by Carling (2014). Although my research was focused on conflict zones and not migrant-related fields, I found that the researcher's positions in this article were relevant for addressing the challenges in my fieldwork research. In a later stage of my fieldwork, when I became more involved in the participatory observation by helping sellers at the market, I realized that conducting in-depth interviews in the natural setting would be challenging. However, to understand the processes involved in the marketplace and the relationships and interactions among the traders as well as between trader and buyers, it was ideal to conduct the interviews in a place where such

issues naturally took place. My background in studying the French language and literature influenced my perception of the inseparable relationship between language and culture and how indexicality helps understand the social system of a community. In some cases, it could also signal the social class of the utterance. In the case of the Ambonese society, non-referential indexicalities such as dialect, diction, voice tonality, and gestures are broadly used to define one's identity, including their religious and ethnic backgrounds.

To create a balance in the proximity and distance between me and my respondents, I tried to enhance some similarity markers that I have with them, and context and discourse played a big role in managing the positionality. For example, with Christian respondents, I managed to create a sense of commonality by showing my interest in and comprehension of their cultural competence through the emulation of specific behaviors, language skills such as their Ambonese Malay accent, and specific words that are commonly used among Christian communities such as "dangke" to say thank you. In contrast, I tried to flatten my intonation and tone when I spoke to Muslim communities to immerse myself in their linguistic commonality. For both communities, I found that emulating their language in terms of the prosodic aspects as well as the choice of words successfully created positive relationships in the continuum of insider–outsider markers and deepened the sense of similarity.

Considering the low educational qualification of most of the older traders at the market, I found it challenging to obtain precise and detailed descriptions of events, especially with respect to the relationships among sellers or between sellers and buyers at the market. However, when I accompanied them to sell their goods and came across interesting interactions occurring at a given moment, they were able to describe the event in a detailed manner and point out the temporal and spatial dimensions of such events. In addition to describing these events, they were able to express their views on

the events in relation to others, along with a limited analysis of the situation. I found indexicality to be an embedded element during the data collection stage, but it remains underexplored by scholars, with little attention given to it when choosing the interview venue.

The choice of interview venue also influenced the process of building trust with the respondents. For example, choosing a comfortable place such as the respondent's house helped create a safe space for the interview. Ensuring that the respondents were comfortable with the interview setting resulted in flexible, informal, and open conversations on various issues related to their experiences with the market and conflict, and the respondents could provide answers in their own tone and diction. For example, during the data confirmation period, I visited one of the main Christian respondents, Romy, who had great exposure to the research since the beginning to the last period of the fieldwork. As I interviewed his mother, Romy sometimes jumped into the conversation. I was surprised that after almost 10 months of knowing him, he never shared any details about his involvement in the conflicts. However, at his house, Romy was very open about his past experiences and was willing to enumerate on things he had done during the period of conflict.

4.8.4 The dangers. Prior to conducting the fieldwork, I was aware that although the communal violence came to an end several years ago, the situation in Ambon was far from conducive to peace. A number of murders and other human rights violations had been revealed, which I knew could affect my security as well as that of my future respondents. Lee-Treweek and Linkogle (2000) elaborated on four key areas of danger that qualitative researchers need to negotiate in their work: physical, emotional, ethical, and professional. Physical danger includes the immediate danger that researchers might have to face during fieldwork, especially

in settings under threat or war zones. In fact, during my stay in Ambon, I often heard about intervillage brawls and tensions or "baku menjaga" (watching each other in a negative sense). In my last week of the first fieldwork period, I witnessed tensions in the borderland area between the Muslim and Christian communities. I had scheduled an interview with a Muslim Ambonese at his house and had been warned that the Muslim and Christian inhabitants had allegedly been throwing stones at each other the night before. As I could not re-schedule the interview, I decided to proceed with it. There, I saw military officers patrolling around the house, carrying standard assault rifles.

The second type of danger is the emotional kind, which includes "the serious threats to a researcher's emotional stability and sense of self." This threat is exemplified when conducting qualitative researches that involve respondents who have gone through or are still undergoing stressful life events. I found that the emotional danger I faced was, sometimes, also related to physical danger. During the first months of my stay in Ambon, I was surprised with how frequently men (young and/or middle-aged men) would catcall me on the streets. At times, they would stop motorcycles in front of me, trying to block my way to say "hello" or ask for my phone number. It was, at first, frustrating to feel unsafe and afraid that someone would suddenly stop me every time I walked down a street.

I discussed this issue with some Ambonese people as well as others from the Western part of Indonesia. They tried to assure me that such occurrences are quite normal in Ambon and warned me against walking alone on quiet streets or alleys, especially during the night. Sometimes, I was also told to not cross particular areas due to religious sensitivities related to the past conflicts. In addition to this feeling of constant anxiousness when I walked alone in Ambon City, the emotional danger also stemmed from the in-depth

interviews with conflict survivors. Often, I could not hold back my tears when they started to cry while recollecting their memories from the conflict periods. This high degree of emotional trust and connection was both an opportunity and a danger for me as a researcher. It indicated the high quality of the data I collected, but I became emotionally drained after such intense sessions and had to take a day or two to recover from these interviews.

The third type of danger is the ethical kind, and a wide body of literature is dedicated to discussing this. Being aware of the sensitive issues that my research might touch upon, I carefully examined the information given to me by the respondents to avoid any future dangers on their behalf. As previously mentioned, a number of evidences strongly suggest their high degree of trust in me. As a local Indonesian researcher, I believe that I have strong responsibility to the results of my research, and I did not intend to jeopardize the progress made over the past 20 years for the purpose of filling a gap in the literature.

In the context of ethics, I would like to highlight a problem that has almost never been discussed by scholars with respect to their research methodologies: the issue of obtaining official permission to conduct research in an area. I fully understand that sometimes this bureaucratic step can hinder the research process and prolong the research period. But what is the rush? Usually, a research can wait a while and does not need to be conducted as soon as possible otherwise the community is in danger. To conduct this research, I applied for three different permission letters from the Ministry of Domestic Affairs, the Maluku Provincial Government, and the Ambon City Municipality Office, respectively. I renewed these permits once they expired. I followed all the required processes and steps despite already having a large network and being in contact with both the mayor and vice mayor of Ambon.

Almost none of the previously conducted studies on Ambon, especially those related to peace and conflict, have mentioned such permission letters. This made me wonder whether these scholars visited a place and then decided to conduct research because they were aware of a gap in the existing literature. The common practice in Ambon, for example, is for scholars to visit the region, accompanied by some local research brokers, and write about the problems that they deem to be interesting. However, a community or society should not be perceived to be a playground. A permission letter, regardless of how inconvenient the bureaucratic process in Indonesia or Ambon might be, implies that the community is not a newfound land full of problems that anyone with a readership could write about after talking to the community and then leave. If scholars are trained to think that following a set methodology is what makes them differ from a novelist, then asking for official permission to conduct research is what sets scholars apart from a "knowledge production colonizer."

The fourth danger is of a professional kind. It is closely linked to the future of researchers who intend to "break with established theoretical and methodological conventions" (Lee-Treweek & Linkogle, 2000, p. 20). Lee-Treweek and Linkogle (2000) further argued that "'unfashionable' topics and emerging or unpopular methodologies which find themselves on the margins of academic acceptability". By this point in this methodology chapter, I have exhibited the global tendency of critics—sometimes in a subtle or, as the Indonesian people would refer to it, a polite way—to research *the other*. In the next paragraphs, I criticize the presence and coming of outsider researchers coming to Indonesia to conduct research without carefully considering their positionality, presence, as well as, I argue, belittling the community or objectifying them by not acknowledging their agency beyond research subject.

I borrow Carling, Erdal and Ezzati's (2014) definition of positionality, which refers to "the fact that a researcher's characteristics affect both substantive and practical aspects of the research process – from the nature of questions that are asked, through data collection, analysis and writing, to how findings are received" (p. 37). In this respect, I like to explain my confusion, to put it lightly, through the words of an Indigenous female researcher, Zoe Todd, of Métis origin. She started her article by expressing her excitement of attending one of the lectures by Bruno Latour, until he discussed "the climate as a matter of 'common cosmopolitical concern'" (Todd, 2016, p. 5). Subsequently, she thought about her year-long fieldwork in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and wrote, "funny, I thought, this sounds an awful lot like the little bit of Inuit cosmological thought and legal orders that I have been taught by Inuit colleagues, friends and teachers" (Todd, 2016). She hoped that Latour would "credit Indigenous thinkers for their millennia of engagement with sentient environments, with cosmologies that enmesh people into complex relationships between themselves and *all* relations, [...]" (p. 6). But instead of mentioning any indigenous thinkers, Latour discussed the work of the late John Hume, a Scottish thinker.

Chavez (2008) wrote about her own family and provided four different statuses to describe the continuum between an outsider and insider: indigenous insider, indigenous outsider, external insider, and external outsider. She argued that "an indigenous-outsider, likewise raised in the indigenous community, has rejected it through high levels of assimilation and has less insiderness compared to an external-insider, who was socialized outside the community, but endorses the cultural perspective and values of the indigenous community" (p. 476). However, such a binary opposition between insider and outsider, as argued by Chavez (2008), results in silence when it comes to describing the position of researchers from post-

colonial global South countries, especially those who share their national and cultural identities, language, and spatial nativity and familiarity with the research respondents, as what I experienced when doing fieldwork in Ambon. Moreover, the relationship has become more complex than just positioning one as an insider or outsider when the "local" researchers are affiliated with a foreign or Western institution (Parashar, 2019). However, these topics are rarely discussed as part of methodological challenge when conducting research in a community.

4.8.5 How detailed should the presented data be? Maintaining a balance between the generality and specificity of the data presented can be challenging, especially when the trust has been built between the respondents and researchers. I was lucky to be able to attain a high degree of trust with both the studied communities, which laid the foundation for in-depth emotional and open interviews. However, these situations also led me to question how I should present such detailed emotional and trauma-based information. I believe that although they have given their consent to use the information for the purpose of this research, there still needs to be a limit to the information I reveal on my end. This relates to the nature of the interviews as well; they usually took between one and five hours, and in the course of the interview, some of the respondents got carried away by their thoughts, and the boundary between publicly shareable and privately conveyed emotional descriptions became vague. Due to this, I usually asked the respondent once again whether I could use the information in my dissertation at the end of such emotional sessions. I also assured them that the data would remain anonymous. However, as my participant observation methods tended to be open to the public in order to build trust with the people at the market, they impacted the degree of anonymity I could maintain for my respondents. At the

end of the data collection stage, I faced the dilemma of how to use the data without putting anyone in danger or in an uncomfortable social situation; for example, with information concerning the gory details of the cruelty during the conflicts.

I do believe that detailed descriptions would help my readers understand the issues that triggered the conflicts in Ambon, but what if these descriptions do not do justice to the real situation at that given time? Capturing a momentous incident without the right impartial context may break down the trust built over the past 20 years. In addition, I found that no number of interviews could assure me about the correctness of the information provided by the respondents, as by my own experience, even these "untouched" grassroots respondents tended to be biased and, sometimes, provided contradictory information. On the other hand, the more experienced respondents, who have been frequently interviewed on conflict-related issues were more general, neutral, and diplomatic with their answers, but they tended to be less nuanced.

I found myself debating the following: "This is important information." "This could provide valid and elaborate data." "Is this necessary?" "What are the future consequences if I reveal this information?" "Will it have direct or indirect negative impacts on the Ambonese society? To my respondents? To the communities I worked with?" "Will it jeopardize the current relatively stable situation in Ambon?" Therefore, the data presented in this dissertation have been carefully curated to answer the academic debates while minimizing the negative ethical and practical consequences faced by the community researched.

4.8.6 Giving back. I identified a practical challenge related to "giving back" during the data collection process. In the southern hemisphere, it is expected to give something to people who have

helped us as a form of appreciation. However, in a fieldwork setting and especially if the area has been extensively exposed to the fieldwork research, the action of "giving back" might result in dilemmas. Lunn (2014) questioned researchers' basis of choosing who to give back to and who to not give back to if the society is indeed homogeneous. Giving one particular person or group a particular gift or sum of money could have twofold effects. Some may be pleased by the gift, while others may start to question the researcher's choice of respondents. If trust is already an issue, especially in conflict zones, this suspicion can disrupt the ongoing data collection process. Further, a respondent's expectation of an incentive can influence the way they answer the interview questions as well as their behaviors. From a long-term perspective, if a society's members are accustomed to "being paid" for their information, a dilemmatic situation may arise for future researchers who want to work in the area using "conventional" methods such as interviews and focus groups.

As an Indonesian, I personally favored the use of gifts to smoothen the first contact with the respondents; it was a culturally influenced way of showing my appreciation, respect, and good intentions towards them. Depending on the positionality and context, I varied the form of the gift offered. I provided the respondents with cans of biscuits, souvenirs from the Netherlands, souvenirs from Australia, a treat at a restaurant or coffee house, or held lectures, presentations, workshops, and language lessons at their institutions. I often used the book that I wrote on tips and tricks to obtain a study-abroad scholarship as a form of gift. The respondents' limited exposure to information on higher education made them consider the book as a valuable gift, especially among those who aim for a high degree and parents who want their kids to obtain a scholarship for their studies. The book also assured about my personal credibility. Meanwhile, the book and scholarship-

related talks/presentations that I gave in various communities helped me connect with the participants through a trustworthy and legitimate social network. In short, it mutually benefited each of us.

In addition, I have previously collaborated and co-authored a conference paper with one of the professors from the Maluku Indonesia Christian University (UKIM), and I presented the paper at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore. Such a collaboration with a local academician to disseminate the findings for a broader audience was in line with the aim of fostering more local and nuanced voices in the international academic arena.

4.8.7 Collective memory and residual conflict narratives. Another challenge faced during this research study pertained to the data collected based on the respondents' recollection of past events, considering that the focus was on events that took place almost 15–20 years ago. An individual failing to recall their collective memory leads to the risk of obtaining incomplete, biased, and invalid data. With the lack of written documents and studies on how people made use of the market as an arena for accumulating economic and social capital during the conflict periods, I had to conduct retrospective interviews to obtain a complete account of the community members' involvement in market activities during that period and, particularly, how such past experiences influence their current perceptions of the market.

One also needs to consider that the respondents' ability to recall past events could also potentially get mixed up with their past *attitudes* or past *emotions* (Markus as cited in Viterna, 2009), resulting in fragmented and biased stories. Viterna (2009) discussed how memories of a conflict period can be a fragile source of data, stating, "memories can be manipulated to achieve particular end". Therefore, to address these challenges and risks, I heavily relied on

the quality of the interviews, including the content, context, and environment/place. For example, when a respondent referred to himself as a hero during conflict, I cross-examined their statements with accounts given by their relatives, acquaintances, and opponents. Referring to Viterna (2009), I also diversified my topic guide to mitigate at least three challenges to memory: 1) *information decay*—the accuracy of the information given by respondents based on their ability to remember things in the past. For this challenge, I tried to cross check the given information by quoting it in the next interviews. As Ambonese people have strong oral tradition, memory easily became collective memory, therefore referencing one's statement to another respondent would test the accuracy. 2) *remembrance environments*—the influence of the respondent's current social context or "remembrance environment" of their memory. Due to the development after the conflict, many places have shifted its function and form. To address this challenge, especially with people directly involved in the market, I usually used specific spatial indication on the location the respondents were referring. Lastly, 3) *violence*—the influence of severe violence experienced by the respondents in the past and how it would affect the answers they provide. In the interviews, I tried to maintain both interest in knowing about the respondents' personal experience and other stories related to the research topic as well as trying to build the logic behind their storyline. As most of the memory tend to be produced collectively by sharing information about violence, it could be challenging to determine to what degree was the accuracy of certain information.

4.8.8 The biases. Conducting a research study in a risk-prone society requires researchers to pay attention to both the methodological and ethical imperatives in the area. Wood (2006) pointed out that the many challenges of operating research in conflict zones

include the absence of unbiased data, logistical challenges including security and accessibility issues, as well as the partisan nature of data compiled by organizations working in the area. As mentioned in the data collection section, I was aware of the possible biases stemming from my personal and professional backgrounds that inevitably influenced this research. I encapsulated my knowledge of living in a familiar setting throughout my personal and professional encounters with the people and research setting. I understood that this situation demands "epistemological questions, that is, how we know what we know and the relationship between the knower and the known" (Gray, p. 2).

My professional encounters in Ambon as a research practitioner and my personal exposure to the marketplace since my childhood fueled my interest to investigate the current research topic, giving it an extent of subjectivity. Yet what is qualitative research without subjectivity? Corbin & Strauss (2008) argued that the quality of qualitative research "resonates with readers' and participants' life experiences ... It is research that blends conceptualization with sufficient descriptive detail to allow the reader to reach his or her own conclusions about the data and to judge the credibility of the researcher's data and analysis" (p. 301). In this respect, referring back to my methodological argument, this dissertation is aimed at adding local nuances to the ongoing everyday peacebuilding scholarship. Therefore, eliminating the possible insider bias in this research would make no difference to the existing body of literature on the topic. Similarly, Chavez (2008) argued that being an insider could have advantages and disadvantages in the research process: "... insiders will find advantages and complications as a consequence of the need to negotiate the subject-object positionality unique to them and of contending with multiple social identities" (p. 480). Further, she argued that to overcome the issue of insider bias, the native members should utilize, instead, a set of tailored methods to

learn about their "home" setting to adjust the existing methods. In a broader context, debates on the endogenous ethnography or endo-ethnography by endo-ethnographers such as van Ginkel (1994) are present in the anthropological literature. His main argument was to consider the extent to which these endo-ethnographers have become insiders.

I was aware that various aspects of my personal life and identity could produce biases that affect the outcomes of this research. Therefore, I carefully positioned myself throughout the fieldwork periods, as I have discussed using a variety of frameworks throughout this chapter. However, what I have not sufficiently discussed is the bias of other researchers, especially foreigners, who have conducted (peace) research in conflict-affected societies. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) pointed out that Western voices have been speaking on behalf of non-Western people, thereby limiting and repressing the non-Western voices instead of enabling them to speak for themselves through their own perspectives and biases. I deliberately counted the number of entries of bibliography in Krause's book to see how far this tendency goes. There were 413 entries in total, including journals, books, reports, news articles, etc. As it was a comparative study, I expected the author to treat the subject fairly. However, among the bibliographical entries, I counted a total of nine Indonesian authors and 14 works by them. In addition, of those nine authors, only one Ambonese academic residing on Ambon Island was cited; the rest were Western scholars who happened to conduct research in Indonesia.

I pointed out Krause's tendency to leave out local scholars in her work not to disentitle her research as a whole but to draw attention to the substantial methodological setbacks that can and need to be addressed by researchers visiting a research setting unfamiliar to them. What Krause did was to undermine, if not suppress, the positionality of local academics to become equal to global scholars.

This means that local academics tend to end up becoming research respondents due to their lack of research products. Inevitably, their views go to the findings section instead of being referred to in the conceptual framework.

This also relates to the term *going native* in ethnographic strategy. Todd (2016) critically argued that going native "was an earnest, clear dismissal of my work because, ostensibly, Indigenous thinkers cannot maintain objectivity when working with our own political, legal and intellectual concerns. Apparently, to be seen as credible in the European academy, Indigenous thought must be filtered through white intermediaries" (p. 11). As far as ethnographic strategy is concerned, a large body of literature on the research methodologies has not questioned the problematic impact of promoting the idea of "going native." Hence, more studies need to be conducted to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages for each group and the variety of outsider and insider degrees to work on enhancing the existing set of ethnographic strategies, especially those related to peace studies.

Chapter 5

The Market Prior To and During the Conflicts

5.1 Introduction

Conflict-related accounts are not always doom and gloom. The stories shared in the preceding Methodology chapter revolved around conflicts, traumatic experiences, fear, uneasy feelings, and criticism. But a situation of strife creates a heavy impact only when it is preceded by a relatively stable period. Not juxtaposing peace and conflict in a binary opposition invites a different understanding and expectation of the historical accounts of Ambon before the conflict erupted. Before analyzing the shift from a relatively stable society to the outbreak of communal violence, this chapter lays out the beginning of the four conflict periods identified among the main findings of this dissertation: 1) pre-conflict period, 2) conflict period, 3) transformation period, and 4) post-conflict period.

The literature on the Ambon conflicts presents a rather precise period for the trend of the intensity of violence. As discussed in Chapter 3, scholars suggest that the intensity of violence significantly reduced in 2004 and claim that the conflicts occurred between 1999 and 2004. However, in this dissertation, the conflict period is established based on the dynamic interplay of trade, marketplaces, and traders on the island. As the chapters progress, I

combine and adjust the period according to the local understanding of the partition of the conflicts using emic terms such as *sebelum kerusuhan, waktu masih aman* translated into the period before the 1999 conflict, (*waktu*) *panas-panas* translated into the heated period of intense violence, *su aman-aman* (kind of safe) to mark the quiet period in between the violent outbreaks, and *su aman* (already safe) for the post-conflict period. While the reasons behind the usage of these local terms will be elaborated further over the next four chapters, this chapter will only focus on two periods—the *sebelum kerusuhan, waktu masih aman* and *panas-panas* periods.

Following the history of Moluccan archipelago, the Maluku province was divided into two provinces after the reformation era: the North Maluku province and the Maluku province. When referring to the Maluku province, I refer to its current state, while the Moluccan archipelago refers to all the islands registered in both the provinces. Scholarly debates on the exact date of the end of the conflict periods are to no avail; depending on the methodological approach and disciplinary lenses used, it may be 2002, 2004, or 2011. The year 2004 was chosen as the end of the conflict cycle for this dissertation because the intensity of violence significantly reduced in that year. More importantly, a significant increase in the number of interreligious interactions due to trading activities at the main marketplace, the Mardika market, was seen in this year. Furthermore, in the same year, the municipality of Ambon also issued an order for traders at temporary marketplaces, primarily in the Christian areas, to be officially moved to the Mardika market. This decision to consider 2004 as the end of the conflict will be discussed in-depth in the post-conflict period (*su aman)* section of Chapter 7.

Claiming 2004 to be the end of conflict period not only showcases the importance of a bottom-up lens for the argument of considering the marketplace as a parameter for peace and security

but also eventually challenges the claims that the conflicts in the Moluccas and Ambon abated due to the Malino II peace agreement in 2002. I do not aim to negate the importance of top-down approaches; instead, I advocate that top-down approaches and organic peacebuilding efforts need to be carried out simultaneously to achieve sustainable peace.

Throughout this chapter, an analytical timeline of the dynamics of the Ambonese society is explored to obtain an all-encompassing understanding of how the conflict period began, the events of the conflict itself, and the self-reliant local coping strategies used during the conflicts. As much as I try to separate the pre-conflict and conflict era accounts, some of the texts provide a before–after comparison. This chapter is organized as follows. The first section explores ethnoreligious coexistence in the Maluku islands, highlighting the principal source of income. The second section aims to provide an overview of the outbreak and phases of the 1999 Ambon conflicts as well as the locational rearrangement and dislocation of the social and physical landscape due to the conflicts. The following section focuses on the trading mechanisms during the conflict. The fourth section lays out the dynamics of the marketplace during the time of conflict. The final section concludes this chapter.

5.2 Ethno-Religious Coexistence in the Maluku Islands

The situation in Maluku prior to the 1999 outbreak can be best described as the period in between conflicts. The area has gone through various wars in the past; one of the triggers was the race to discover nutmeg in the 16th century. However, no particular patterns or exact intervals can be drawn from one conflict incident to another. On the eve of the outbreak of the 1999 conflicts, the Ambonese society was in a precarious situation. The migrants, commonly referred as BBM (Bugis, Butonese, and Makassarese),

were blamed for taking financial and job opportunities from the native Ambonese/Moluccan people. Though it is not openly discussed in daily conversations, the distinction between the migrants (some were called *orang dagang,* which means people who trade) and native Ambonese (often called *anak negeri,* which means children of the land) is inevitable. Kadir (2017), in his research on the Butonese traders on Ambon island, argued that *orang dagang* refers to "middlemen, merchants, and traders coming from outside the local society who have contributed to stimulating the local economy" (p. 106).

In the case of Ambon Island, the BBM was about to be expelled from the island and sent back to their native origins for they were accused of being the source of the chaos. Meanwhile, in alignment with the common narratives on the trigger of the conflict, a dispute between a Makasarese Muslim migrant minibus driver and native Christian minibus passenger is said to have started off the conflict. Therefore, whether or not it did have an impact on fueling the conflicts, ethnicity, religion, and primordiality allegedly cooked up the beginning of the conflicts in Ambon Island as well as in the Moluccas. To understand why the 1999 conflicts occurred and how they were sustained for a couple of years, let alone escalated, I elaborate on the pre-existing ethnic and interreligious coexistence patterns in the Moluccas, particularly on Ambon. In doing so, several societal elements that coincide in the Ambonese society are elaborated upon such as religion and the economic spheres of life, including the types of traditional economies, trading-related activities, and the dynamics of the marketplace and its actors prior to the conflicts.

Markets in Ambon prior to the conflict.

This Mardika market in the past, before the conflict, from '87, it was normal... between the traders and officers, it was

> normal. Especially during the New Order era, their authority was beyond the limits. So there was no such thing as [personal/group] interests, nothing until the'99 conflicts. Then, we immediately stopped the activities at the Mardika market. (Head of the Mardika market unit, personal communication, December 2017)

Before the conflicts erupted, marketplaces in Ambon were dominated by Muslim people, with a significant level of migrant representation. There were at least three big markets in the heart of Ambon City: the Mardika market, Batu Merah market, and Pasar Lama market (old market). The Gotong Royong market also survived the conflicts but was gradually abandoned by traders and buyers after the revitalization of the Mardika market. The old Batu Merah market was one of the two oldest markets, located a couple of hundred meters from the current Batu Merah market. The old Batu Merah market was the main market along with the Pasar Lama market. Meanwhile, the Mardika market was built in 1986/1987 on reclamation soil, aimed at becoming the central market in Ambon and replacing the old Batu Merah market.

In terms of administrative status, although the current Batu Merah and Mardika markets are physically close to each other and are only separated by a narrow river, each area falls under a different village administration. The Batu Merah area is ruled by a king who inherited the title from the *mata rumah* or kinship line, and the area is called *Negeri* (a country in Indonesian, but in this context, it is similar to a village). The king has authority similar to that of the village head; the difference lies in the procedure for the transfer of power. With the municipal regulation No. 13 passed in 2008 on the procedures for nominating, electing, appointing, inaugurating, and dismissing a king (tatacara pencalonan, pemilihan, pengangkatan dan pelantikan serta pemberhentian raja), the king enjoys the same governmental privileges such as an official car and monthly salary, among other benefits. On the other side, the Mardika village is

ruled by a village head. During the conflict, the majority of the inhabitants of the Batu Merah area were Muslim, whereas the Mardika village was predominantly a Christian area. To avoid any confusion, the Mardika market was and is dominated by Muslim traders, but the rest of the village is inhabited by the Christians. Meanwhile, the Batu Merah market was once a mixed-religion area with Christian inhabitants as well, but they fled or were evacuated to neighboring Christian areas such as Karang Panjang when the first riot broke out.

Prior to the conflicts, it was a common occurrence for the inhabitants of the Mardika village and the Batu Merah *Negeri* to get involved in fights. The fights usually took place around the time of religious celebrations such as Eid-ul Fitri and Christmas, similar to the beginning of the 1999 conflict. These fights were mostly triggered by the abuse of alcoholic drinks among the young or middle-aged men of both areas. The head of Mardika market unit, a Christian who lived in the Mardika village when he was a kid, recalled such fights between the two areas as a being common and conveyed that people from both sides would throw rocks at each other or get involved in physical fights. However, these fights usually lasted only for a day or two and were followed by a *baku bae* (an act to befriend one another and leave the troubles behind). Therefore, he was surprised to witness a fight on 19 January, 1999, which seemed to be a common one, leading to a communal conflict lasting for years in Ambon:

> In the past, when I was a kid, there was no market in Mardika yet. Men threw rocks at each other and women went shopping at Batu Merah—there was a market in Batu Merah. (Head of the Mardika market unit, personal communication, December 2017)

This interview excerpt of interview highlights the uneasy relationship between the Mardika and Batu Merah people. When he mentioned the market in Batu Merah, he was referring to the old Batu Merah market that no longer exists. As common as they were, the fights and rock-throwing incidents did not hinder women from gaining access to each area's market; it was business as usual.

Apart from the wet and traditional markets, there was only one department store in the entire province—a national retail chain called Matahari, which was officially opened in 1995 as part of the Ambon Plaza mall (Amplaz). The coming of the modernized department store to Ambon dislocated the original Pasar Lama market. The department store building also accommodated stores that could be purchased by traders. Most of the stores sold clothes, shoes, and jewelry. One respondent mentioned that her parents ran a store in this building and sold stationery and school supplies. They came from Buton Island and were traders at the Pasar Lama market. When the government asked them to move out of the market to make room for the modern construction, her parents were lucky enough to find their way back and obtain a place at the new building. However, when the conflicts erupted, they had to flee to Buton island, and when they returned to Ambon, they decided to sell the store to a fellow Butonese trader because the economy was not good for business.

Positioning traders in the Ambonese social structure. The traders in Ambon have always been associated with migrants and the Muslim identity. In everyday conversation, migrant people are referred to as orang dagang (people who trade). These traders who came to Ambon once aimed to reach Banda through the Gorom islands in the eastern part of Seram. Ambon was arguably not the main trade node, especially during the period before the Indonesian independence (Ellen, 2003). Yet, these encounters and interactions through trade made up the ethno-religious diversity in the

contemporary Ambon. As per Ellen's understanding of the social interactions embedded in the Moluccan trading activities "there should be an ethnic dimension to trade at all, anywhere, arises from the juxtaposition of social and cultural differences that the spatial movement of people brings about" (pp. 260–261).

One of my respondents, Ibu Isna, told me that she, a native Ambonese, married an *orang dagang*. At first, I did not realize that her words had other implications. The next day, her elder sister said the same when referring to the husband of Ibu Isna. The way the words were spoken with a lowered voice was a somewhat clear indication that the word *orang dagang* held a strong negative connotation, and this is the case even today. My conclusion was affirmed when I was invited to their village to join the Maulid Nabi celebration (celebration of Prophet Mohammad's birth). Ibu Isna said that she did not return to her village because only those who married people from the same village or other native Ambonese (proved by having the *pela-gandong* relation) could do so. During this celebration, one *mata rumah* or kinship line had to prepare for the food for all the clan members. Each *Negeri* in the Moluccas consisted of a number of exogamous patrilineal clans, which could be distinguished by their inherited names (see more in Chauvel, 2008). As Ibu Isna married a migrant, she lost her patrilineal inheritance line. She said that, accordingly, she no longer had rights or obligations to the village.

However, the term *orang dagang*, which is strongly associated with migrants, sometimes overlaps with the word *pendatang*, which means migrant in the Indonesian language. Therefore, a relation was suggested when, during the conflicts, a similar line was conveyed by both communities: *"Seng apa-apa cuma katong kan bilang, orang luar sa yang biking konflik"* which translated to "It was not a problem, we (always) said that it was the outsiders who caused conflicts." If we look closer at the identified conflict actors, the migrants, being

outsiders, were pushed out of the island. Despite this, many of them remained on the island and found shelter in the various IDP camps. Second, the *orang luar* or outsiders could also refer to the Muslim para-militias who were blamed for escalating the Ambon conflict (Adam, 2008). However, blaming the outsiders or external actors is a common practice in conflict-affected societies as it results in the opposing communities considering each other as victims and reconciling.

5.3 How Did the Conflicts Erupt?

As mentioned several times previously, in this dissertation I take into consideration the local understanding of the conflict periods based on the economic activities in and around the marketplaces. A large body of literature takes an etic perspective and uses the violence intensity trend to depict the conflicts in Ambon. To start with, I agree with the mainstream literature that the outbreak of the communal violence occurred on January 19, 1999, preceded by an incident in Dobo, Aru, in December 1998. The exact starting date was repeatedly mentioned by the respondents, whereas they were unsure of the other years in which the violence occurred.

This section depicts the timeline of conflicts from 1999 to 2004. As the background of the conflicts has been explored in Chapter 3, this section will focus on the breakout of conflicts that cemented the shift in the trade practice, emergence of marketplaces, and everyday life that bridged the socio-cultural aspect and household economy. This section also aims to shed light on the roles of trade and market in the development of the conflicts as well as peace within the conflict-saturated society.

Tension and resentment towards the migrants in Ambon were prominent in various degrees, from subtle sarcasm to confrontations. At the time, the ethno-religious labor division between the informal

and formal positions was quite distinguishable, where migrants occupied mostly informal jobs and native Ambonese especially the Christians took up the formal jobs This gap did not immediate incite tensions between the members of the different communities. This could also be explained by the authoritarian policies imposed by the Central Government that gave no room for the citizens to challenge their status quo. The society was already mentally segregated one way or another. In his article, Adam (2008) revealed how the Christians started to take up informal jobs during the conflicts, and this socio-economic shift is present even today. Before the conflicts, the pedicab drivers were mostly Muslim migrants from Sulawesi Island. Motorcycle drivers, although few in number, were also Muslim migrants. This socio-economic landscape significantly changed during the conflicts.

The major religious hostilities began in Ambon City and then spread out among other areas of the Moluccas. Just like other communal conflicts, there were periods during which quickly tension escalated into communal fighting, bombing, murders, and other types of physical violence. There were also times when the situation was relatively stable and no unrest broke out, but the people were unsure whether the conflicts had indeed abated. The three years leading up to the formal peace agreement of Malino II in 2002 signified the period during which the Moluccas and North Moluccas became battlefields for conflict as well as peacebuilding interventions. Locals referred to this period as "*waktu (masih) panas-panas*" (when it was (still) highly tense). Some argue that the transition to the peace period began immediately after the first unrest in January 1999. Others define the transformation period as having started after the physical violence significantly reduced in 2004.

Most of the damages occurred during the *waktu panas-panas* period. People were shocked and could not rightfully understand

how to cope with the situation. The military interventions did not seem to gain the trust of either community to stop the violence. Instead, distrust and competition over power underlined the relationship between the military and police forces. When Megawati came to power in 2001 as a civilian president, it inevitably invited further skepticism about her ability to resolve the communal conflicts in five provinces of Indonesia: West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, North Maluku and Maluku (van Klinken, 2007). From a political view, this was a test for Megawati. The reformation era seemed to cut loose the military power, leaving them handicapped; they were no longer part of the House of Representatives, and the police force, which was once under their control, became an independent institution. Various speculations led people to believe that the prolonged conflicts were induced on purpose. Mass media was biased along the religious line, making the situation even worse with constant provocative news building the conflict-related narratives. One of the peacebuilding efforts in the early conflict period was to establish independent media outlets for factual and neutral news production. The local and central governments, being authoritative institutions, tried to calm down the enraged communities by visiting them and conducting dialogues with the victims of the conflicts.

During this period, people were displaced to areas that were predominantly homogeneous in their religious beliefs. Some stayed at their relatives, friends, or community/religious leader's houses. Many conflict narratives also revolved around how people voluntarily accepted strangers into their houses as well as how some of them tried to save and hide people of other religious beliefs at their houses. The rest of the conflict-affected society members had to stay in IDP camps. The IDP camps first emerged as temporary shelters until the situation became conducive to peace. It was both the initiative of victims stranded in particular locations as well as

a top-down offer for people to stay at institutional offices, military headquarters, religious worship places, and other public places such as hospitals, schools, and the Mardika market. Other groups chose to flee to a neutral area called the Wayame village. This area remained a mixed ethno-religious area over the course of the conflicts. The Wayame inhabitants refused to engage in any provocative actions that would divide their people. Tony Pariela (2008), an Ambonese academic, argued that this village expanded the roles of preserved social capital as the basis of a survival strategy that helped them to overcome the external threat. Pariela also highlighted the roles of the mixed market in this village as enabling the smooth integration of people for conducting safe exchanges, which helped re-build the trust between the Muslims and Christians through trading.

Conflicts were indeed started in the market area, but the initial fight was not triggered by traders or other primary market actors as discussed in Chapter 3. Most scholars who have worked on topics related to the Ambon conflicts have provided rather vague descriptions of who instigated the conflicts, with inconsistencies in the actors involved and the place where the incident occurred (Braeuchler, 2015; Kadir, 2017; Krause, 2018). I argue that such claims indicate that quick judgements have been made, resulting in the market taking the blame for the initial incident.

As far as the Ambonese people can remember, the main Mardika market was the Muslims' major source of income. During the conflict period, it was once burned down in the beginning of the conflict period—allegedly by the Christians, but this was never proven. It caused stronger negative sentiments among the Muslim people towards the Christians. After being burned down, the Mardika market area was closed to the public and was used for activities other than exchanges; it consisted of a temporary military post, IDP camp for the Butonese and other migrants, and other abandoned parts. The market areas were enclosed within a barbed

wire fence and a sign that said "Restricted Area, No Trespassing." Discourse around the market's burning took place every day. This is understandable since the market was the core of the Ambonese society and was also a symbol of power and security for the Muslims. Further, a lot of people lost their main source of income due to the incident. These sets of narratives are embedded within the framework of analyzing market roles; that is, while ethno-religious discourses are strongly related to the symbol of the marketplace, we cannot ignore the fact that the marketplace enables economic exchanges that fulfill the basic needs of its actors.

Apart from the beliefs that the Malino II succeeded in halting the communal violence in the area, the Ambonese and Moluccan people seemed to agree that it was the Moluccans themselves who ended the conflict (Braeuchler, 2015). The fatigue caused by the seemingly never-ending war and the loss of beloved family members, friends, and community members made them reluctant to continue fighting against each other. Instead, in the last period of conflict, they were in search of peace, a state beyond the absence of violence (Galtung as cited in Braeuchler, 2015; Ernas, 2012). Some argued that the Malino II peace accord was perceived as an elitist and top-down way of ending the conflicts. Although it did involve a wide range of actors, representation of the middle-range leaders, especially from the grassroots level, were missing in the process. The mechanism behind choosing the representatives from the Muslim and Christian communities also received critiques and objections from the society, including statements that the chosen actors were not the people in the churches and mosques. Further, the meetings were only held over a two-day period, which was an insufficient duration to resolve conflicts and establish peace. However, Pariela, one of the Christian delegates and an academic at Unpatti, stated (in October 2017) that a set of meetings had been held prior to the peace accord but had been kept low profile:

> It lasted almost two months; we discussed all important issues transparently, whether it was Laskar Jihad, RMS, and Christian Laskar, Unpatti. All were present, [we had] representation of all religions; from Christian protestant four people, from Catholic there was Pastor Agus, now in Jakarta. From the Muslims there was not only Tamrin Ely, there was Nasir Rahawarin. We all had a discussion at that time. Therefore, when we came together for the meeting in Malino, the mechanism was already arranged. (Tonny Pariela, personal communication, October 2017)

Pariela also argued against the claim that the Malino II was purely a top-down approach to conflict resolution. He stated that the initiatives were taken after several sectorial meetings at the grassroots level, which enabled the actors to discuss the important requirements for a peaceful Ambonese society. The state intervention at the end of the process (during the peace agreement meeting) was aimed at legitimizing the meeting. Despite the various critiques of the peace agreement, scholars and activists widely agree that without this official halt of conflict, it would have been difficult to begin an all-encompassing peacebuilding process in Ambon (Ansori, 2014; Braeuchler, 2015; Ernas, 2012).

Interreligious relations in the midst of conflicts. The conflicts forced people to rejoin their homogeneous religious identity groups, turning Ambon Island into a collection of religiously uniform villages. The areas that had been previously inhabited by mixed communities either became borderline areas or only welcomed residents with a particular religious identity. While the map is currently not as rigid as it was during the conflict and transformation periods, certain patterns of residential segregation are still apparent. This section maps out the shifts in the residential patterns of the people on Ambon island prior to the conflicts and during the conflicts.

> The riots were the most horrible here in Ambon; they killed us. Although we killed people, we let go of others [referring to the Muslims] because these people rented space here from us annually. They were traders here, the Muslims. We asked them to leave; we asked them to go home. (Tante Jessica, Ambonese, personal communication, June 2018)

Tante Jessica, a Christian female respondent, shared this heroic story about the people of her neighborhood saving some Muslim lives. Benteng village, the area in which she lives, was once inhabited by diverse communities. The village shares a border with the Muslim area and was considered as a strategic place for the Christian people to reside in during the conflict. Benteng hosts the second port on Ambon. This port is operated by the Pertamina, a national oil company, and is meant to only allow oil ships to dock. Due to the strategic littoral landscape of this area, the people of Benteng started to open their food and commodity businesses along the coastline. Not long after the conflict erupted, it became an alternative speedboat port that provided access to other Christian villages. As more farmers, traders, food middlemen from outside of the area were gathered there, local people started to buy goods from them or exchanged their food crops for other commodities. This process led to the emergence of the Benteng market that continues to exist in the present day.

Apart from the heavy narratives of violence and death, there are also various stories on interreligious cooperation during the conflicts. The extended social capital built over a long period of time eventually helped them to find sanctuary during the conflicts. A Christian woman who used to live in Silale-Waihaong, which is now a predominantly Muslim area, recounted how she had been saved by her Muslim neighbors during an attack in their neighborhood. She had been separated from her husband and kids and later found out that they had also been sheltered by a different Muslim family. A

similar account was also given by a Muslim respondent, who recalled his experience of living in a Christian house for a while because of a blockade that surrounded his residential neighborhood. He was grateful for the help of the Christian neighbor who risked his life to protect the Muslim family. During the interview, he emphasized that not all Christians were bad, and similarly, not all Muslims were bad.

Prior to the 1999 conflicts, the Muslim residences were spread out in the northern part of Ambon island, which was later known as the *Jazirah* area (peninsula) or *Leihitu* region. Meanwhile, the Christian residences occupied most of the southern part of the island, which was often referred to as the *Leitimur* peninsula. Economy-wise, the *Leitimur,* i.e., the Christian areas, were home to many business premises, including important markets, supermarkets, and vital governmental offices. Most of the successful sellers, traders, and merchants were either Muslim migrants (identifying as Bugis, Butonese, or Makassarese people) or Chinese; the native Christian Ambonese primarily worked in the service sector or government offices. There were several areas that are of mixed-religion, sometimes in the form of enclaves within the Christian areas. The existence of those mixed-religion areas shows that the communities co-existed with a relatively stable relationship, regardless of the prominent gaps in the educational levels, formal job opportunities, and political power that could potentially spark social jealousy. The below excerpt highlights the role of the mixed area, the Wayame village, as one of the main destinations for the IDPs during the *panas-panas* period.

> Back then, Islam and Christianity [Muslims and Christians], especially in Pohon Mangga during the unrest, were so afraid that they all fled to Wayame; during the unrest it was a highly tense situation (waktu panas-panas tuh) (Tante Jessica, Ambonese, personal communication, June 2018)

The Ambonese society was deeply segregated during the conflicts. The sectarian boundaries hindered most aspects of the daily life of the people. Children could not go to school, employers were too afraid to go to their offices, especially those whose offices were located in the opposite religious area, and in general, people could not access the markets to fulfill their daily needs. Prior to the conflicts, there was a significant number of mixed-religion areas. As the conflicts grew in intensity, it became dangerous to trespass certain areas, and it was almost impossible to live in an area inhabited by a community of the opposite religion. The stories and identities embedded in each village forced the Ambonese to redefine the extent of their spatial knowledge. These spatial boundaries later became the reference for each community member to move about safely and conduct their everyday activities; words became infrastructure, and stories signified spaces. The fluidity of space and place, especially in relation to trade points and marketplaces during the conflicts, will be elaborated upon in a later section.

5.4 Trade During the Conflict

Conflicts in Ambon impacted the daily lives of not only the Ambonese inhabitants but also other communities from neighboring islands. Most literature on the conflicts focus on the physical violence, political stance, and peace agreement, but scant attention has been paid towards understanding the ordinary life of the people when the physical violence was on hold. People needed food to survive, which was a different kind of battle that they needed to win. This battle was mainly dealt with by the women.

The offered solution depicts the current situation of the markets in Ambon. Traders tend to accumulate social capital, especially the native Ambonese (*Anak Negeri*), to establish a solid position of superiority. Otherwise, the ethnic minorities would automatically

take up the power at the market, with or without heed to the ethnic majority's concerns.

From home gardens to self-reliant local coping strategies. Despite being less dependent on the agricultural sector, the conflicts did impact these activities on the island of Ambon, causing a major shortage in the food available to feed the population. The insufficient food sovereignty, i.e., the community's ability to rely on their own capacity of food production, as well as the blockage of food distribution within Ambon as well as supplies inbound to the island left no choice for the inhabitants than to explore their local strategies for subsistence management. Two common approaches were to cultivate home gardens and make use of abandoned gardens in the neighborhood. People who had to leave their original dwellings and temporarily stay in other places opened up new gardens or revived the existing vegetation patterns of the area. In an interview with Ca Mina, a Muslim peace activist who led a project to reconcile farmers and traders at the market, she mentioned the following:

> The inhabitants started to come back [to Ambon]; Mardika market was too far away. The people who lived there—the IDPs—were farmers [before the conflict]. Therefore, the vegetables were bought and sold there. (C. Mina, Ambonese, personal communication, July 2018)

The area inhabited by these farmers, Wayheru, has since been the main source of vegetables on Ambon island. Most of the farmers were of Butonese origin and had previously lived in various parts of Ambon. They did not have many destination choices when fleeing from the conflicts. Their choice was to either return to their hometown in Sulawesi, stay in the IDP camps, or move to relatively neutral areas without a strong presence of native Muslim Ambonese. These migrant groups had to deal with various

challenges during the conflicts. Even though they were Muslim, the native Ambonese Muslims were reluctant to accept them into their villages, resulting in an ethnic boundary. On the other hand, these Muslim migrants had to face the opposing Christians during the unrest as much as the native Muslims did. To survive, the migrants continued their previous occupations as farmers and maximized land use for potential income. As will be elaborated further in this chapter, the restriction of transport routes impacted the emergence of trading points along the routes towards the main Batu Merah market during the conflict.

The people who had to leave their homes and stayed in the IDPs camps could get access to humanitarian aid provided by various stakeholders, especially NGOs and the local government. But this depended on the camp they were in because the humanitarian aid was criticized as being unequally distributed. The groups that decided to remain in place received limited aid. One possible reason for this, considering how a NGO works, may be related to the accountability of the aid to the donors if it was given to people outside of the project framework. Nevertheless, people questioned the transparency of the government-led aid initiatives as well, especially after the presidential instruction on the acceleration of development in post-conflict Maluku and North Maluku Province. In some casual conversation, respondents joked about the socio-economic revitalization programs and other general aid initiatives which seemed far from what they promised.

5.4.1 Commodities during conflict. The price of fish increased significantly in the Christian areas during the conflicts. The Ambonese people could not buy fresh produce, especially fish, from the neighboring Muslim fishermen as they used to. Most of them had no other choice than to buy fish and other produce from Christian re-sellers who had established strong relations with

Muslim traders prior to the conflict. These Christian re-sellers later became the pioneering actors of the emergence of temporary Christian markets.

> The people who traded in that market were only *basudara* (brotherhood/sisterhood) Muslims; the Christians could not enter even though they were dependent on each other. For example, there were plenty of vegetables at Batu Merah market, a lot of fish, but the markets in the Christian areas faced difficulties in getting fish. It was in the blighted area of the city, then most of the sellers, at the market there, were *brothers/sisters* migrants from Sulawesi. There, people mostly sold meat and fish. (Ca Mina, Muslim Ambonese, personal communication, July 2018)

Ca Mina described the interdependency between the Muslim and Christian areas for food supplies, especially the difficulty faced by the Christians in obtaining fresh fish. On the other hand, the migrants mostly sold meat in the area separated by the native Muslims. Although the supply of fish primarily came from the Muslim areas, in some Christian areas such as Mahia, a mountainous area overlooking the Banda sea, the inhabitants were accustomed with fishing before the conflict erupted. Therefore, during the conflict, they did not rely on the market to fulfill their needs for fish consumption.

The two excerpts below—one from a Catholic resident and one from a former head of the Industry and Trade Official Office of Maluku Province—highlighted that the Christian areas were supplied with goods during the conflicts. However, in terms of stock availability and price, there was a distinct difference; the price of 1 kg of sugar doubled from the Muslim area to the Christian area. Having lost their jobs and no longer gaining steady income, people found it harder to afford such overpriced commodities. This

resulted in people sneaking out to Mardika market for better prices on goods during the *su aman-aman* period.

> The food stocks in the Christian area were the same as those here in the Muslim market. Everything was available. Everything that was available here was also available there. The only difference was the price. It was more expensive and the stock was limited. But in general, the goods were available. (Opa Rino, Catholic Ambonese, personal communication, June 2018)
>
> Food was not allowed to reach the Christian areas. Imagine, an egg here in our area was Rp 1000; in their area, it was Rp 3000 at that time. Sugar in our area was only Rp 8000 or Rp 7500, but on the other side, it was Rp 15.000. (Former head of the Industry and Trade Official Office of Maluku Province, personal communication, January 2018)

5.4.2 Trade as a household coping mechanism during the conflicts. The attempts to seek out new marketplace opportunities were common responses to the food scarcity during the time of unrest. As given in the quotation below, a Catholic resident acknowledged how the Christians took up petty trade for income generation during the unrest although they had no prior experience in it. He mentioned how most female Christians decided to become petty traders.

> The Christian people had less experience in such businesses ... so then, it was different for those [traders] who could not get access to the market here [the Mardika market] and ended up moving their goods there [to the Christian area]. There were also new traders. For the sake of available opportunity, they suddenly decided to get on board. Then, yes, the prices were evidently more expensive compared to here [the Mardika market]. (Opa Rino, Catholic Ambonese, personal communication, June 2018)

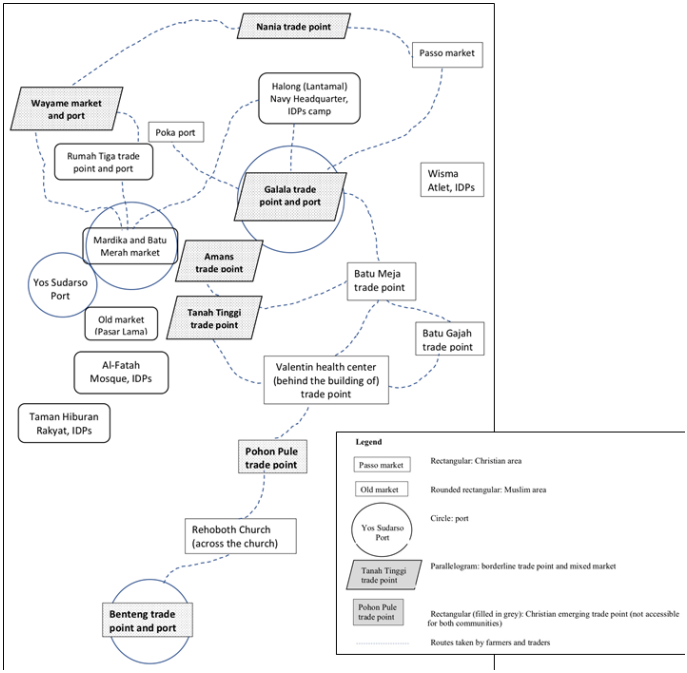
However, it is important to note that not every place can be an ideal setting for trading activities. An interview respondent revealed several variables of physical space which potentially enabled borderline trade to take place: first, the traders had to be clear of any immediate threats. Second, the place had to be safe for them to conduct economic exchanges. Third, the place had to be strategic and easy to access. Fourth, the place had to be capable of providing shelter for the traders during tense, conflict-prone situations.

> Loss in the sense that, they had bought the vegetables, so if they did not sell them, the capital turnover would be disrupted or stopped. And in a difficult situation like that, women stood up to feed the family and revive the household economically. They were traumatized with living in poverty and the disadvantages. No private space, and then those who had better economic status suddenly lost everything, lost their jobs. So, the women eventually decided to stand up to improve the economic condition, and perhaps for them that was not necessarily peacebuilding. (Ca Mina, personal communication, July 2018)

The above interview quote illustrates the reasons behind the bravery of female traders who decided to enter the trading sphere in dangerous circumstances. These acts, driven by the needs of the family, highlight the female leadership and agency present during crisis situations. The argument presented in the quote negates the idea that these trade-related activities were consciously performed to promote peace among the community members. On the contrary, these female traders had no preliminary intention of building peace. In fact, the word peace, especially referring to official peace agreement, would not have crossed their mind at the time conducting the trade activities. Their sole purpose was to survive and peddle their goods so that they could manage their lives.

Map 2 The emergence of temporary trade points in the Christian areas during the conflicts

Figure 1 The emergence of temporary trade points in the Christian areas during the conflicts



Source: a compilation of data collected during fieldwork, based on interviews, document research, and FGD

The above schemes map out the landscape of the marketplaces and trade points during the high-tension period in Ambon City. The left side of the scheme shows the Muslim areas in the form of rounded rectangle shapes. The right side of the scheme depicts the flourishing trade points and marketplaces within the Christian areas. The map and scheme above both depict the emergence of temporary trade points in the Christian areas during the conflicts, including markets, borderline trade points, and IDP camps. In addition, both also depict the existing markets in the Muslim areas as well as one market which was said to be a neutral market during the conflicts—the Wayame market. These temporary markets came into being as part of the community's coping strategies. The Christian areas are represented with rectangles in the figure. Each community had one main port; however, the Muslim port was the major port on Ambon Island as well as the cargo and passenger hub for inter-island connections in the Moluccas and Papua. The port is represented by a circle. The line connecting each node shows the routes taken by farmers and traders; this includes the flow of the commodities. These lines provide a general impression of the important relationships between the ports, markets, and trade points. The parallelogram represents the borderline trade points and mixed markets during the conflict periods.

Based on de Certeau's (1984) two types of spatial narratives—the map narrative and the tour narrative—the first map is a common illustration of the spatial distribution of the markets and trade points as outsiders would prefer. However, the locals did not perceive the routes in the way it is depicted on the first map. Therefore, re-constructing these routes based on the interviews, I developed the second scheme that consists of various trading nodes with the route patterns of the buyers. The latter scheme provides an overview, in the form of a tour narrative, of the geographical segregation and how spatial distance was perceived by the locals. However, it is also

important to note that the respondents' memories were subjective when reconstructing these routes because none of the routes were definite, and each person would start their trip from a different entry point and follow the route that they thought was safer than the others.

The IDP camps became trade points due to the surplus of supplies obtained from government and non-government aid initiatives. As discussed in the previous subsection, the distribution of aid was later perceived to be a problem, resulting in jealousy among the communities as most of the conflict recovery supplies were only distributed to the IDP camps. A former IDP interviewee conveyed that there were times when they had too many instant noodles packages because the camp kept obtaining the aid supplies; therefore, some of them took the initiative to sell the surplus aid products. Adam & Peilouw (2008) pointed out in his article that the struggles of the IDPs, who were forced to migrate to two refugee camps in Ambon City, triggered them to develop certain capacities to cope with the insecurity and stress in a proactive way. Living in a new place through forced migration and being surrounded by the ongoing conflicts enabled the multiple axes of identity among the IDPs. Adam (2013) argued that, through this process, the IDPs showed how they developed their coping mechanisms during the conflict and post-conflict periods.

Since the Muslim farmers and traders could not sell their products to Christian buyers during the conflicts, they had to develop other networks—they conducted their trade in the frontiers, went to the neutralized market in Wayame, or gained a connection to the Seram Island areas. Meanwhile, the Christian side had to find ways to access the food supply either from within Ambon or outside the islands. The spatial segregation also forced the supply distribution routes to become distorted, slowing down the process. It impacted the emergence of transit points for goods

distribution and later fostered the emergence of temporary markets in the Christian areas.

Considering the timeline of the emergence of marketplaces in Ambon, this five-year period from 1999 to 2004 highlighted the peak of communal segregation or the *panas-panas* period in Ambon. With Benteng market established as the main market for the Christians, the Ambonese had two main markets for the first time, and the latest market was dominated by Christian sellers for the first time. A former market daily surveyor defined the market as the heart of the Ambonese society in an interview; i.e., the life of the society revolves around it. A similar statement was also made by a Christian female seller in Benteng village, as illustrated below:

> It was at the Lau market [Lau comes from the word laut, which means the sea]. When the conflict was tense (waktu kerusuhan panas-panas), the Lau market became the center. So, we never went to the Mardika market. (Tante Jessica, personal communication, June 2018)

As mentioned earlier, one of the most common income generatingstrategies during the conflicts was petty trade, which resulted in a "surprise [temporary]" market (*Pasar kaget*). These *Pasar kage*t were built in each religious community's area. Furthermore, Adam (2008a) elaborated on two types of trading in Ambon. "The first type is 'outside' selling defined as 'activities in marketplace down the road or by walking around with a mobile stall'" while the second type of activity comprises of "'inside' selling activities or trading activities that took place at home or at least inside the walls of the camp" (p. 6). Similarly, Van Klinken (2001) viewed the market activities in Ambon as being part of the informal economy that helped the two communities to cope with their lives during the conflict for Ambon City was subject to institutional collapse, resulting in the loss of almost all the traditional state authorities.

On the bright side, this situation created opportunities for people to start markets in the city, regardless of the area. The interview excerpt below shows that the government allowed the establishment of new markets in Ambon and saw them as having the potential to reduce the tension during the conflicts.

> Let the market grow; give them [capital] incentives. People should be equipped to be innovative … now that they are trading we should just let them do it for as long as it continues; management and regulations should come later. (Vice Mayor of Ambon City, personal communication, interview in January 2018)

The then mayor of Ambon, Marcus Jopie Papilaja (r. 2001–2011) introduced a significant policy which touched upon the idea of creating "point centers" in a number of safe places in Ambon. These points of trade were aimed at allowing economic transactions that involved Christians and Muslims. In addition, to provide a guarantee of security, the mayor ordered security officers to safeguard the locations. Al Qurtuby (2016) stated, "During the riots, ordinary Christians and Muslims found it difficult to purchase food and sell their wares since the main traditional markets were on fire and ruined. They were also afraid of carrying out economic activity in these devastated traditional markets" (p. 157). These centers later became the so-called *Pasar kaget*. However, the roles of *Pasar kaget* were fluid and dynamic both positive and negative towards peacebuilding. The positive side was, for instance, the mayor believed that trading activities involving people from various backgrounds would allow them to communicate with one another and build trust, which is the basic capital for reconciliation. On the other hand, with the development of the *Pasar kaget,* the mayor's initial intention of enabling communal interactions failed. In contrast, the *Pasar kaget* became tokens of religious

segregation in Ambon during the conflicts and at the beginning of the transformation period. Over the course of the years, the traders at the *pasar kaget* became protective of their status quo and refused to be relocated to the mixed market to the extent that they monopolized access to goods in the Christian areas. Such practice hindered possible interreligious interactions between the Muslims and the Christians to take place through economic exchanges.

5.4.3 Trade routes, female traders, and peace narratives. During the *panas-panas* period, the speedboat service was the most suitable transportation method that enabled them to travel across the sectarian boundaries. As illustrated in the excerpt below, the trade in the main Batu Merah market was only made possible through the speedboat services. The speedboat services were privately owned by individuals or informal companies. Public sea transport was also available to link Poka and Galala with a ferry. When the conflicts escalated, the ferry and speedboat services had to be re-routed to avoid areas where riots took place, and the ferry service operation ceased during the *panas-panas* period or when it was too dangerous to cross the conflict areas. In addition, the speedboat routes were multiplied to adapt with the then locational arrangement, especially for connecting religiously homogeneous areas. The routes differed based on the areas being connected; i.e., between two residential areas or between residential areas and marketplaces or trading points.

> At that time, Muslims have already been back to Rumah Tiga, then cross by using speedboat to Batu Merah, goods, people, like that, all by speedboat ... labor, labor, picking up goods from the car we put them to the speedboat. From us in Rumah Tiga, that time, then from speedboat from the city, we took the goods to the cars, then they brought them to Hitu, those who would go to Seram, you know. (La Adin, Butonese, personal communication, January 2018)

A respondent who lives in Benteng said that she often took the speedboat from Benteng to Galala to visit her family. She had to pass by the Muslim areas of the Mardika market on the way, which she pointed out as a dangerous area. Snipers were one of the most frightening aspects of the Ambon conflict narrative. The fear of getting shot by a sniper seemed to be more unbearable than getting slaughtered by their counterpart. Bombings were considered an attraction rather than something to fear. Most of the male respondents revealed that when people heard a bomb explosion, instead of running away, they were tempted to see the explosion area. For women, any sign of violence would hold them back from their outdoor activities, including exchanges at the market. Thus, exchanges could only take place in a non-violent situation during the conflicts, i.e., during a silent period, which is later referred to as the *su aman-aman* period (to be discussed in Chapter 6).

In this *panas-panas* period, people chose to not venture outdoors for a while, waiting for the threat to be over. People had no options than to buy goods either at temporary markets or from mobile peddlers. The term *papalele* was used for female traders wearing traditional clothes and *jibu-jibu* for Muslim fish peddlers. The difference between the two types of sellers lay in the type of goods they sold—a *papalele* sold fruit and vegetables, whereas a *jibu-jibu* sold fish. It is widely known that these two types of sellers were female peace agents, and most of the literature emphasizes the gender perspective embedded in their roles (Soegijono, 2011, 2018; Souisa, 1999; Tupamahu, 2012).

During the violent conflicts, the roles of the women were prone to be undermined as they primarily appeared to be victims. Women were conflated with children into one concept: "women-and-children." The loss of their men-folk (husbands, fathers, sons) in the conflicts forced the women to take over the breadwinner role. Despite the negative impact of conflicts on women, Adam

(2008) argued that the situation empowered some women and led them into the public sphere, enabling them to engage in activities previously designated only for men. The activities included being a member of the armed movement, trading in the market for economic survival, or becoming actively engaged in peacemaking, among others. In the case of Ambon, the women reportedly led various interreligious peace dialogue efforts at the grassroots level (Ansori et al., 2014; Bräuchler, 2015). However, when it came to formal measures, the women had little involvement in the peace table talks (Centre for Humanitarian Report, 2010).

The excerpt below is an example of a peace message extended by women to their male relatives, including their husbands and sons, as well as to their acquaintances. Women's peace narratives mostly emphasized how difficult life was during conflicts and the suffering they had to endure.

> We should not take part in the conflicts ever again. We should not take part in the conflicts ever again. What has already happened, we must learn from them. Because we cannot live like this forever. We need to eat, so we should get better [in life]. Other people go to war. But we should not join the war. (C. Mina, Muslim Ambonese, personal communication, July 2018)

It sounds like a simple message. But this message was powerful during the time of uncertainty. In times of war, especially during communal conflicts with the enemies being familiar people, the community members were unsure of who to trust, which message was accountable, and what to believe. Since women hold a special position in the Ambonese society, inherited by tradition, their words were respected and listened to. Therefore, this seemingly simple message was believed to have a strong impact on family-level violence prevention.

Such an appeal to cease violence was also extended by female traders during their trading activities. Adam & Peilouw (2008) argued that informal jobs, such as small-scale trade, became the main source of household income, especially for internally displaced people (IDPs) in two camp areas during the conflict and transformation periods. Women, in general, were forced to the forefront to undertake economic transactions and fulfill their daily household needs as the men faced greater difficulties and dangers during this time (Adam, 2008b; Adam & Peilouw, 2008; Soegijono, 2011). To this regard, the role of female traders during the conflicts was increasingly discussed. Muslim women felt safe to walk around the conflict-prone areas due to the common knowledge that women and children would be protected as, according to Islamic teachings, hurting women and children during a war is a huge sin. Ironically, these female traders were accused of being spies for the Christians and faced threats from their fellow Muslim groups. If found selling goods to the Christians, their goods would be confiscated and discarded. Any exchange information of between religiously heterogeneous traders was seen as a threat which could lead to the act of killing.

5.5 The Market During the Conflicts

People said that the market once had a religion—it was common to differentiate between "Christian market" and "Muslim market." This not only applied to the market but the origin of the commodities as well. For example, fish obtained from the Christian areas were considered as "Christian fish" and vice versa but it did not last for long time. In the beginning of the conflict, when trust was gravely shattered, distinguishing the origin of commodities became a means to protect oneself from any possible danger, i.e. each community was afraid that the food was poisoned by their counterpart. Once the Mardika market was burned down, the main

economic activities, especially those of the Muslims, took place at the Batu Merah market. A designated speedboat port in the market area linked the Batu Merah market to the Wayame and Rumah Tiga markets.

> Back then, the Mardika market was quiet [deserted] during the conflicts (waktu kerusuhan). It was so quiet [there was] nothing. Most [of the traders] were at Batu Merah market. (Ca Mina, personal communication, July 2018)

Although contact avoidance was relatively strong in Ambon during the *panas-panas* period, there were some spaces in which the two communities could interact. Inter-religious contact in Ambon was not limited to meeting on college campuses or at schools but also occurred in places such as markets and hospitals over the course of everyday life (Pamungkas, 2015). This subsection outlines the emergence of temporary markets in the Christian areas as a result of the blockade to the regular markets, which were located in Muslim-dominated areas, and how the new trading node impacted the Ambon trade routes. Ethno-religious identities play a prominent role in these issues. Contrary to the belief that the Ambon conflicts were between the Muslims and Christians, these two groups showed discreet but extensive cooperation in their trading activities, especially for intervillage goods distribution.

> Yes, we had to transfer [through] sea transport … on our side, we already built our own market, but sometimes people like us, we re-grouped [to go to the main market]. It was quite common because the Muslims, we had transactions at the borderline to buy chili pepper, tomato, they sold to our people ... apparently, they conducted the borderline transactions with the guard from the military forces. (Tante Jessica, personal communication, June 2018)

Tante stated that although the Christian communities began building their own temporary marketplaces, they would visit the Mardika market during quiet periods. She also mentioned the emergence of borderline trade points where Muslims and Christians met to conduct transactions, especially vegetable exchanges. In a segregated society like Ambon, the borderlines become the battlefields during conflicts as each side fights to enter their opponent's zone; these were the thin margins that separated them. However, due to the same logic, the borderlines often became the most eligible spaces for interreligious interactions to take place, especially in the form of exchanges, barters, or economic transactions, because each side could easily back away into their respective zones if a conflict took place. These borderlines were perceived as being chronically violent places; over the course of the conflicts, the very same spaces were transformed into relatively controlled areas with reduced violence due to the presence of official military guards and the building of official military posts. This understanding indicates the importance of considering the time dimension of economic transactions in times of conflict, such as how the borderlines switched from being battlefields to contact enabling spaces.

During the conflicts, petrol was rarely available although it was one of the basic needs for Ambonese households for cooking purposes. The petrol distribution was limited. The central petrol distribution point was at Wayame, which consisted of an oil refinery and storage system for the entire Maluku province. It was also the village in which the inhabitants declared that they did not want to participate in the conflicts. This village became the symbol of peaceful interreligious existence in the midst of the conflicts (Pariela, 2008). As given in the excerpt below, a Muslim Butonese truck driver explained the dynamics involved in this market (the Wayame market). He emphasized that although Muslims and

Christians killed each other in other areas, the people who stepped into the Wayame market felt safe because the area was safe.

> It was neutral at that time—it was divided between Muslims and Christians but neutral. It was a market, a transaction place. There, Muslims and Christians went shopping ... although they killed each other, once they got there, it was safe. No more revenge. (La Adin, personal communication, January 2018)

The number of traders in Ambon City declined during the conflict period, it then rose steeply as the temporary markets in the Christian areas mushroomed. However, the number significantly decreased, once again, in 2003, following a relatively stable situation in Ambon with people being able to access markets in both the Muslim and Christian areas. Most of the narratives related to this period convey that the physical violence had significantly reduced, and the state of civil emergency signed on June 27, 2000, by President Abdurrahman Wahid was lifted on September 15, 2003.

The number of mobile peddlers (small-scale traders) who sold their commodities by walking around various villages decreased once people stopped being afraid to visit the markets. A simple explanation for this is that the goods sold by the mobile peddlers were more expensive than those at the temporary markets, and the prices were significantly lower at the main market. Various initiatives to maximize the role of economic exchange in fostering peace had also been established for a while. The programs were initiated by the Baku Bae Movement, Peace Circle for Women and Children, and other NGOs, aimed at enhancing and multiplying interreligious interactions among the female traders. Three "peace" markets were built and inaugurated under the framework of the Baku Bae Movement: the Baku Bae Market (now the Mardika market), borderline trade points at Pohon Pule, and borderline trade points at Nania village. The interview excerpt below describes the

emergence of trade points outside the main market as well as the interreligious interactions aimed to fulfill the people's daily needs.

> The people initiated what was called the markets [many markets]. Transactions actually happened outside of the market … in spaces for *baku dapa* [meeting each other] that were safe for them to interact with each other such as Amans Hotel, Military Hospital, and, finally, they came to the markets with their goods. The Muslims brought fish, the non-Muslims came with other stuff, then the goods were sold there; they conducted the exchanges there. And then, those spaces were transformed into the Baku Bae market. (Ca Mina, personal communication, July 2018)

The trade points were often referred to as the *baku dapa* spaces—*baku* means "with each other/to each other" and *dapa* (or "dapat" in the Indonesian language) means "to get"; together, they mean "to meet up."

In contrast to the general belief in Indonesia that to live in harmony, one person should not confront another, which is rooted in the Javanese culture, the Moluccan society sees harmony from a different perspective. In Maluku, disputes and disagreements or even "raiding and fights became a fundamental reason for building peace and reciprocity" (Kadir, 2017, p. 20). It confronts the ideal motto of Indonesia, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika,* i.e., Unity in Diversity, for which the Moluccans build harmonious social relationships not by uniting the complex elements of society but, rather, by creating a sense of reciprocity and parallel relationships in the form of patron and client, center and periphery, etc. (Kadir, 2017). While such parallelism allows for power struggles within the society, it also ensures that there is a clear dividing line between the superordinate power and the subordinate community, enabling the general people to access their own sovereignty. This division of societal roles supports the argument that traders are mostly members of ethnic or

religious minorities, particularly migrant communities. The migrant communities struggled to fully integrate into the host society. They still experience active discrimination due to the social and cultural differentiation and are believed to "not share the moral values of 'civilized society'" (Evers, 1994, p. 8). The accumulation of this feeling of exclusion and being discriminated against cemented the latent tensions between the migrants and natives. As they usually interacted for the purpose of economic transactions, the marketplace then inevitably became the place where the tensions arose. As Kadir (2017) argued, "Butonese traders with native Moluccans in the marketplaces do not necessarily represent peace after the conflict, but rather a relationship that is built based on the pragmatic motives of reciprocity and ongoing mutual suspicions" (p. vi).

5.4.1 Transport arrangements during the conflicts: Routes, drivers, and military guards. This subsection highlights several examples that show the shift of trade routes during the conflict periods in the Muslim and Christian areas. These examples are later incorporated into an overview of the general transport arrangement, especially for distribution truck routes. A merchant seller, Taufiq, originally from Medan, explained how strategic roads had been barricaded, especially in the borderline areas, to mitigate any contact between the conflicting parties. The barricades forced people to use alternative routes to reach their destinations. The same applied for trucks carrying goods to be distributed in the Christian or Muslim areas as well as minibuses carrying passengers.

> For example, if it was tense here (di sini lagi panas), the road was most likely barricaded in Galunggung-Batu Merah. So, it means that the basudara/non-Muslim brotherhood would have to pass by the hills. Those who came from Passo, Batu Gong, they came out from Belakang Soya—that was the route—

> so during the riots they passed by there." (Taufiq, personal communication, January 2018)

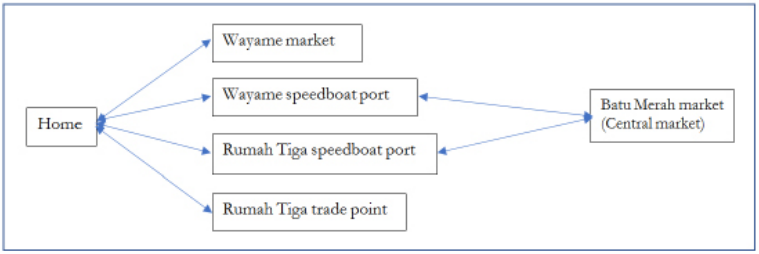
Difficulties were often encountered while reconstructing the map as the respondents were unable to go beyond their personal spatial experiences, which inevitably limited their ideas about the situation in the segregated areas. The first two schemes given below depict the trade routes of a Muslim seller living in a predominantly Muslim area near Poka port. A female respondent, Wa Rohmah, who used to sell vegetables at Mardika market prior to the conflicts (*masih aman*), shared her trade route as well. To get to the main market, she went down to the Poka port by taking the minibus or a jointly chartered truck with her farmer/seller neighbors. If she took the minibus, she had two options to get to the market: by following the minibus route around the coastline and then downtown or getting off near the port and crossing the strait by ferry or a small wooden boat. If she took the chartered truck, one of the above options would be chosen by the driver. Although there were other trade points nearby, she always went to the main market because she had already earned a place there, and she was afraid that somebody else would take her spot if she did not show up. Additionally, she had a greater chance of selling out her goods at the main market. Throughout the conflict period, Wa Rohmah continued to sell her surplus garden products to the nearby markets, usually at the Rumah Tiga market near the Poka port.

> Oh, in the past, when I used to trade, I took the wooden boat ... crossed to Galala, then got on the minibus to the market ... it was when it was still safe (waktu itu kan masih aman). (Wa Rohmah, personal communication, January 2018)

Figure 2 The trade routes of Muslim traders prior to the conflicts.

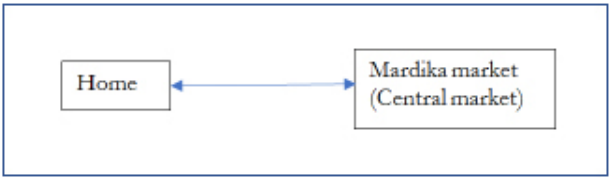
During the *panas-panas* period, various strategies were used by the Muslim sellers. A female seller, Wa Intan, shared four possible strategies that she used to distribute and sell her commodities. From her house, she walked up the hill then down to Wayame market, a mixed village where Muslims and Christians were both welcome. If the business was good, she would directly return home after selling her goods. Otherwise, she would take the speedboat to the Batu Merah market, a functioning market located next to the Mardika market. Alternatively, instead of going up the hill and down to the Wayame market, she would take another route to the Rumah Tiga trade point. This trading point was established next to the Rumah Tiga speedboat port during the conflict period to accommodate sellers who needed to go directly to Batu Merah without stopping at the Galala ferry port. At first, only a few sellers decided to set up stalls around the temporary speedboat port at Rumah Tiga. However, in just a few months, an increasing number of sellers took the same route to the Central market, and some of them decided to end their journey at the Rumah Tiga trade point. Similar patterns were also found among the sellers at several temporary speedboat ports; the sellers occupied the space surrounding the port and reshaped the space according to their needs, such as the Benteng market.

Figure 3 The trade routes of Muslim traders during the conflicts



A different story was narrated by Mama Romi, a female Christian seller who lives in a village located 45 km from the Mardika market. Mama Romi began her journey at around 2 am and, with other traders from the same village, took a chartered minibus to the market. She recalled that before the conflicts, she sometimes stayed overnight at the market and slept on the terrace, tables, or any other available place. Everything changed once the conflicts began. For at least nine years, she could not freely enter the Central Market that was once her second home.

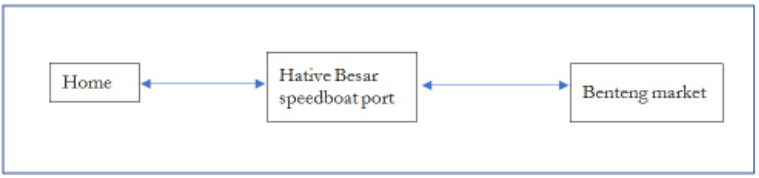
Figure 4 The trade routes of Christian traders prior to the conflicts



During the *panas-panas* period, which lasted for a few years, Mama Romi traded her goods at the Benteng market. She and her fellow traders took a chartered minibus to a new temporary speedboat port in the Hative Besar village, which was in the Christian area. They continued their route to the Benteng market. The commodities they sold were usually gathered from their home

gardens or from nearby gardens, such as seasonal fruits, starchy staples, tubers, and cooked and half cooked dishes (e.g., *lamet* or a traditional snack made of cassava; pickled vegetables; and cooked cassava leaves). The Benteng market became the central market in the Christian area, and traders from various corners of the Christian villages preferred to open their stalls there. Due to the variety of goods offered, buyers also preferred to shop at this market even though there were smaller temporary trade points near their houses. To get back to their houses, these Christian sellers usually took a similar route back to the Hative Besar port and continued their journey on a regular minibus. Thanks to the network Romi had established during her time at the Benteng market, when the Mardika market re-opened in 2008, she and her fellow traders joined a male Christian trader who had *pela gandong* relations with the Kailolo clan that was responsible for managing the stall distribution.

Figure 5 The trade routes of Christian traders during the conflicts



The buyers' journey to the market varied extensively due to various situational aspects during the conflict period. Tante Jessica used to sell cooked dishes such as fried banana and *es cendol* (green jelly-like dessert beverage) in the backyard of her house. She visited the Mardika market almost every day to obtain the required ingredients at the lowest price. She stopped selling the dishes once the conflicts erupted. However, she still visited the central market when the situation was relatively stable (*aman-aman)* despite living near the Benteng market. Along with her neighbors from the same

village, she traversed the hills to get to the Mardika market when the situation was *aman-aman* or kind of safe. The interview excerpt below describes her journey to the market.

> I used to sell fried banana ... sold cendol dessert ... it was in the backyard of this house. Before the conflicts erupted (dulu sebelum kerusuhan), I peddled. Before the conflicts, I came down to the market [Mardika] often to buy stuff ... When the situation became kind of conducive (ada aman-aman), we went shopping ... We went up to the hill and then we went down. We ended up behind the gas station where we could get on the minibus. At that time, we walked; minibuses and other transportation modes were rare and difficult to get. (Tante Jessica, personal communication, June 2018)

The commodities distribution process also faced various challenges. At the main ports—Yos Sudarso and Galala—the police and military routinely held roundup patrols. A video by the Associate Press (AP) showed the security apparatus checking the goods and the driver's identity card. Such roundups were also important to ensure that traditional machete was not carried among the commodities to prevent any potential violence by provocateurs. The types of knives that could be carried around were limited, and some traditional and tailor-made machetes were illegal during the conflicts. The possession of a disallowed type of sword on a daily basis would have led to questioning by the military and the police.

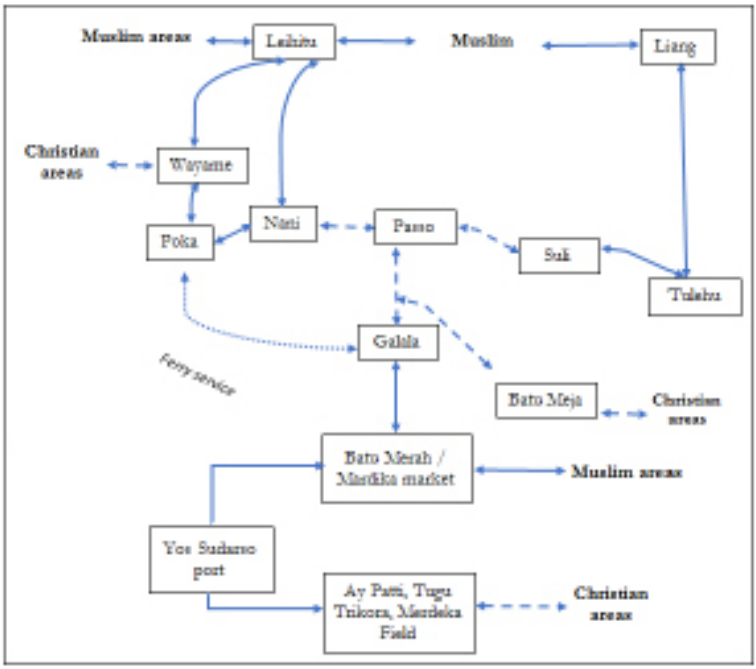
A former market gangster leader relayed the importance and meaning of a machete for the Ambonese. He claimed that he still carried around a specific type of machete that was associated with his village of origin. The machete was often depicted as a scissor-like double-bladed sword, emulating the Zulfiqar sword of the Prophet Muhammad. The machete was ordered from a neighboring Muslim village, which was infamous for its sword production during the conflicts. Another respondent—a distribution truck driver who was

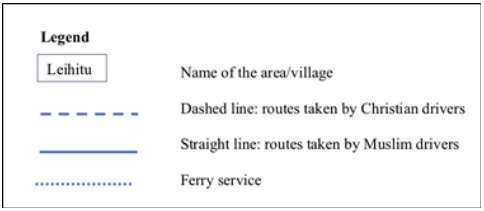
also a former Muslim front leader—showed me his almost-one-meter-long sword during an interview. He said that he needed the sword for self-defense, on and off duty.

The quotation below illustrates how the truck drivers performed their jobs in relays with their religious opponents during the conflicts. Every time they had to cross an area predominantly inhabited by people of the opposing religious belief, they had to stop at the borderline and wait for their fellow drivers to take up the relay and continue the distribution to the final destination.

> Actually, the drivers worked in relays. The Christian driver reached here, but could not go through … there was already a Muslim driver waiting to get here—a Christian area again—he got off and there was another driver." (Opa Rino, Catholic Ambonese, personal communication, June 2018)

Figure 6 Religion-based transport distribution routes in segregated communities





Source: a compilation of data collected during fieldwork, based on interviews, document research, and FGD

Drawing from various sources, a rough map on the cross-village trade routes and distribution flow during the conflict period was created, as can be seen in the figure above. Starting from the distributor's storage area at the main port, the distribution trucks could generally take two routes depending on their final destination and the availability of the previously established extended social networks; the goods distribution patterns during the Ambon conflicts had to be adjusted based on the intensity of the violence. The supply chain strategies were dependent on the cooperation between the Muslim and Christian truck drivers, presumably hired by the predominantly Chinese distributors. The dashed line depicts the routes taken by the Christian drivers, while the straight line depicts the Muslim drivers' territory.

As previously mentioned, the ferry services from Poka to Galala were suspended during the *panas-panas* period. They were briefly active again for a few years but then completely ceased in 2015 after the inauguration of the Merah Putih bridge that connects the Poka and Galala villages. This bridge helps reduce the travel time travel by at least an hour between these two villages. Prior to the establishment of the Merah Putih bridge, people had two options to travel from the airport to downtown Ambon City: They could take the road that followed the Ambon coastline or the ferry to save

gas and some time. But the ferry service schedule and operation could be unreliable. To operate the ferry, they had to wait until the minimum capacity permitted was reached, and sometimes it got delayed due to the weather conditions, etc. Hence, neither option could guarantee a short travel time to downtown Ambon.

Four strategies or scenarios were employed by the Provincial Office to help coordinate the distribution flow and maintain the food availability in the Maluku province. As outlined by the former Head of Official Office Trade and Industry Maluku Province, each scenario was based on the situational security condition. The first scenario was for when the situation was relatively stable with the absence of physical violence; the switch between Muslim and Christian drivers took place at the demarcation/borderline areas. When the situation was tense with occasional violence, the second scenario was implemented. The military or police vehicles/trucks were used to load and distribute the products, going from the main port to the distributor's storage area. The third scenario was for when the violence escalated and was prolonged; not only did they use the military and police trucks, the drivers were also from the military/police units. In addition, some of the military members also sat on the back or on top of the truck to emphasize their presence. This strategy was in response to threats from the Muslim paramilitary groups that occasionally stopped the distribution trucks from distributing food items to the Christian areas. The fourth scenario was for situations of intense conflict and uncontrollable violence. It was similar to the third scenario but included an additional guard from the military and police brigade mobile standing along the streets in the red zones. This involvement of additional actors in the distribution process increased the overhead cost for distributors; thus, consumers had no choice but to pay higher prices for the goods.

The interreligious co-operation that enabled the formation of these distribution networks could not be separated from the existing *pela gandong* ties among the Ambonese. During an interview, an 80ish-year-old former Muslim distribution truck driver mentioned that the interreligious exchange of drivers could only be made possible with two pre-conditions. First, both the drivers (Muslim and Christian) had to have a relationship established prior to the conflict. Second, the drivers had to be former leaders of the groups. He further explained that the person had to be brave, not afraid of death, and always ready to get involved in fights if needed. As far as most of the respondents could recall, such an exchange of drivers was a common practice and did not necessarily incite any interreligious fights. My respondent, the truck driver, was a native Moluccan, but he wasn't from Ambon or the surrounding islands; therefore, he did not have any immediate *pela gandong* ties with any of the villages on the island. However, during the *panas-panas* period, he was one of the front leaders for a Muslim group in his neighborhood. He emphasized during the interview that he was not afraid of anything, anyone, and was proud that he could drive around the Christian areas. When the conflicts de-escalated and the distribution process became less dangerous, he shifted from being a driver to supervising the loading and unloading of goods at a Chinese-owned distribution storage until his retirement.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored the relationship between the time and spatial dimensions in an ever-changing conflict-prone society over two periods, namely *sebelum kerusuhan, waktu masih aman* (the period prior to the conflict) and *(waktu) panas-panas* (the conflict-prone period). I distinguished between trade and marketplace, why the spatial extent matters, and how it functions in the broader context of a religiously segregated society. For the marketplace, space as a

physical boundary is crucial for its economic function. The findings suggest that the location of a marketplace requires a spatial story and cannot be any place. Similarly, spatial stories also enhance the functioning of trade points; in some cases, they are related to interreligious encounters at the borderlines.

The findings reveal the shifting of trade routes used by sellers, buyers, and merchants/distributors during the conflicts. The trade routes and the emergence of temporary markets in the Christian areas revealed that the Ambonese communities developed a local coping mechanism by cultivating their home gardens, peddling, and trading. Social networks and cultural ties as well as the economic drivers of trade-related activities arguably set the foundation for a more structured conflict transformation. Economic transactions allowed interethnic, intervillage, and interreligious interactions to take place, eliminated distrust among the traders, and potentially extended peace message narratives at the micro level, i.e., the family level. One of the most important aspects was the revival of local wisdom and the cultural pact that created bond between the Muslim and Christian villages, locally called *pela-gandong*.

In addition, the women of Ambon played an important role in the local peace and reconciliation processes between the Muslim and Christian communities. During the *panas-panas* period, women regularly traveled to markets to buy or sell products. Muslim traders, especially, visited the main market, which was the Batu Merah market at the time. However, their main reasons for contributing to the reconciliation initiatives were rooted in the need to survive rather than being conscious attempts to resolve the conflicts.

Chapter 6

Su Aman-Aman: The Transformation Period

6.1 Introduction

The situation during the conflicts in Ambon was not always bustling with exchanges of gunfires, bombings, or mass riots. Sometimes, it was quiet too. People could walk around (although mostly in groups), gather on the street to observe the situation, or chat with passersby at the nearest safe public space available. This momentous part of the time during the conflicts could be observed when people felt safe enough to conduct their routine activities, such as buying groceries, visiting their families in other areas, or catching up with friends. They took this chance to chat with people outside of their house or area because when the situation became violent, they usually locked themselves up. For the purpose of this chapter, the period between violent incidents is described as the *su aman-aman* – kind of safe period. Furthermore, this chapter argues that the *su aman-aman* period was the period where a transformation took place in relation to the conflicts, which, to some extent, allowed organic community-survival strategies through exchanges at the marketplace and borderline trade point. The word transformation indicates a possibility of change to happen in the society affected by conflict, where it mostly aims to achieve stable and peaceful society.

This chapter proposes interpretation of the conflict-transformation period in the cycle of the conflicts in Ambon. Before examining the market dynamics during this period, it is useful to first identify the local understanding of the transformation period as well as the local conceptualization of the word "transformation," as the understanding of this period differs in the existing literature on the Ambon conflicts. Locally, the transformation period is described as "*waktu su mulai aman-aman*" ("when it started/became safe/conducive"), in contrast to the period of the conflicts, which is referred to as "*waktu (masih) panas-panas*" ("when the situation was [still] tense"), as discussed in Chapter 5. The transformation period does not have an additional timeline as, during the conflict, people did not count the days by aligning with what year they were in because time, arguably, was perceived differently. The closest way to define time was by marking religious celebrations—for example, Christmas is always on 25th December, while Eidul Fitri was around January in 1999 and December in 2000 and 2001.

Starting from this emic perception of violence and absence of violence, this dissertation tries to distinguish the *su aman-aman (*or the transformation period) by contrasting it with the characteristics of the *panas-panas* (or the conflict period). The *panas-panas* period was characterized by physical violence, circulated conflict narratives (for instance, people warned each other of the danger of getting shot by snipers if they left the house), and particular sounds associated with violence. Through the emic understanding, the transformation to peaceful or conducive period can be defined as the period when (1) people did not observe and were not involved in physical violence, (2) people did not warn each other to go out but instead supported each other to go out in groups searching for cheaper commodities in borderline areas, and (3) people did not hear any sounds associated with violence. This set of characteristics

has already broadened the understanding of the conflicts in the exiting body of literature related to it. The emic understanding of the characteristics of conflict provided a fresh outlook, which only focused on the outbreak of physical violence, with little to no attention to the in-between periods. Therefore, this dissertation tries to highlight the quiet periods during times of conflict.

In this chapter, I depict how conflict and violence were timely and spatially sensitive. The need to understand the structure of the conflicts in life with its time dimension is critical to advocate for the fallacy in the conflict studies that tends to generalize the period and the duration of the conflicts. In the extreme case, the readers may be led to imagine that every hour of the three-year period of the conflicts, people continuously shot each other. Despite the conflicts, everyday life still went on. As for the spatial dimension of the conflict-affected society, distance seemed to be defined differently. Instead of referring to the common geographical units of measurement such as km or miles, the distance was calculated through travel time, modes of transportation, movement of the people, and availability or feasibility of a vehicle. These tendencies have been discussed previously in chapter 5, where a trade-and-shopping-route scheme was drawn based on the respondents' spatial stories related to navigating their daily lives during the *panas-panas* period.

6.2 How did peace happen?

This section highlights the peacebuilding efforts of the grassroots actors and focuses only on the efforts related to economic exchange. Moreover, it aims to zoom in from the more general peacebuilding efforts, as have been explored in Chapter 3, to more specific organic initiatives on the ground.

6.2.1 An attempt to define peace. Throughout the fieldwork period, it was quite challenging for me to grasp the locals' definition of "peace," if any, which is called *damai* in the Indonesian language. Often during the interviews, to understand what they meant by the word "peace," I had to resort to different explanations to help them understand what I meant by the word "peace." I used two types of questions to explore whether Ambon is indeed peaceful according to them: (1) Is Ambon peaceful at present and (2) how is the situation in Ambon at present/ how do you define the situation in Ambon at present? In response to the first closed question, they mostly answered, "Yes, Ambon is peaceful at present." However, when I turned the question into an open question, words such as "safe" or "conducive" (translated into Indonesian as aman) and "normal" were used more often than "peaceful." Yet, even till the end of my fieldwork, I could only vaguely understand which situation or condition would aid our understanding of the word "peace," which raises the questions: is it possible that perhaps the word "peace" is not the most suitable to define a post-conflict society such as Ambon? Hence, the goal of this study is to find where peace did come about in Ambon, because what if, in the end, trying to define peace is merely an ambitious attempt to overwrite the actual situation?

Therefore, following the research design related to taking the emic and etic perspectives, I went with a balanced way to find a middle ground for this debate. I started my quest with a simple epigram on peace, which was generally circulated in both Muslim and Christian communities: "peace started at the market". Further, in the interviews, it was understood that peace could mean a situation where both the communities can meet, interact and conduct activities in the same space. Therefore, peace here means an encounter. Moreover, peace also means what people from both the sides could fight against the conflicts and win over what they

lost during this period. For example, the conflicts caused a religious rift between the communities. Thus, an opportunity to meet with their religious opponents provided them a sense of a non-conflict, which reminded them of the time before the conflicts broke out.

For instance, I interviewed a Muslim family that, before the conflicts, used to own a set of store buildings at the Mardika market. I asked them the following question: "do you think the current situation in Ambon is peaceful?" To this, they responded with nods. Moreover, when I remarked, "But each community still lives separately," they replied, "yes, but it is better like this; this is peace." I tried to stimulate the discussion by saying that according to some definitions of peace, if people still avoid each other to an extent, the situation cannot be called peaceful. However, their response was: "but for us, this is peaceful." We will return to the debate between what is the conventional definition of peace and what the locals define as peace later. Another example of an unconventional understanding of peace came from a 70-year-old Christian seller who also used to sell at the Mardika market before the conflicts, then had to move to the Benteng Market during the conflicts, and has now succeeded in making her way back into the Mardika market. During an FGD, she told us that Ambon is now peaceful. When one of the participants asked to compare how she feels about staying overnight at the Mardika market now and before the conflict, she lowered her voice and shook her head. She said that she would never sleep at the market as she used to before because it is not safe for her anymore. Her response seems to contradict the conventional meaning of the words "peaceful" and "safe".

Hitherto, I attempted to understand the contradictions in the understanding of peace and safety, as I had pointed out at the beginning of this subsection. It was common for Ambonese people to suit answer according to the context of the question and the extent of interpersonal connectedness. A general answer to any

question related to security issues would mostly be answered with a "yes, it is peaceful." However, if we broke down the questions into a deeper and more personal statement, the answers would vary. Nevertheless, it would be a simplification to claim that Ambon is not peaceful. What I do argue is that the way the locals tried to generalise by describing the situation of Ambon as peaceful can be seen as an act of performative speech, as it demonstrates their unconscious desire to have peace in Ambon. As previously mentioned, the Ambonese society has inherited a strong oral storytelling tradition, which guides their everyday behaviour, including how they want the Ambonese society to be.

6.2.2 The sound of the conflicts. It had become clear that the transformation or the su aman-aman period attempted to fill the gap regarding what people did when no violence was occurring. Therefore, it tried to re-construct what existed in the literature on the period of the conflicts by looking at the number of incidents as well as when they occurred. Instead of using the etic or the "bird's eye view" perspective to understand the period of the conflicts, I used the emic insight to deconstruct the period. An emic lens helped me relate to the respondents' experience when they spoke about the conflicts. Referring back to the data analysis process, I was inclined to look closely at the role of language in its broadest sense as a means to analyse data. As has been briefly mentioned earlier, there were some sentences and specific words that were used to identify the shift from the conflict period to the transformation period. This view is meant to guide the readers to feel and experience the conflicts through the eyes of the survivors.

Despite the intensity of the conflicts and the high number of death tolls, many of my informants who claimed to experience the conflicts, surprisingly, had not seen the conflicts. In fact, they had only heard about it. This was especially true in the case of women,

whose definition of the conflicts differed, and their description of the conflicts focused more on the results of the violent conflicts. They talked about the victims of the conflicts (including those who died as well as those who were injured), their lives in the IDPs camps, and how difficult it was to navigate around the city or simply to go to school. Further, they talked about the hints that signaled an attack. For example, they could make out an attack was about to occur by the sound of a steel power pole being knocked with stone or metal, church bell tolling, bomb explosions, and people crying and shouting. The "sound of something" came up a lot during the interviews.

> "So, if there was a bomb explosion, we did not go down shopping at the market. We went shopping here," said Tante Jessica, a Christian cooked-food seller.

It was also those particular sounds that left them traumatized years after the violence ended. A female Muslim bomb-maker-turned-peace-worker said during an interview: "*bunyi-bunyian itu membuat saya trauma*. Dulu saya paling takut kalau dengar suara petasan, karena saya selalu menganggap petasan itu identik dengan suara senjata" ("Those sounds traumatized me. I was most afraid when I heard the sound of firecrackers because I always thought that firecrackers were associated with gunfire sound").[5]

Identifying how locals perceived and understood conflict became important for understanding their everyday peacebuilding efforts.

> When we suddenly heard the sound, one went back there and the other went here because it was borderline. So, for example, at the Mardika market, to the direction of the Belakang Soya,

[5] Retrieved from https://www.bbc.com/indonesia/majalah-41144811 (accessed on 18 January 2019)

> was the non-Muslim brotherhood (*basodara*). Then, we were here," said Taufiq, 40, an accessories merchant who is originally from Medan (interview in January 2018).

The sound during the conflicts determined people's reactions. In relation to market and trade, it signified and gave a hint of whether the situation was safe enough to conduct the exchange or not. As illustrated above, traders in the borderline as well at the Mardika market also carefully examined the sound of the attacks to decide whether they should exchange at the market or flee to a safer place. Later, it also became clear that the crowd of the market could help in determining whether the situation in Ambon, in general, was safe or not. Many people coming to the market for both selling and buying meant that no significant physical violence took place in the surrounding areas. This corroborates the argument that it was during the period of the absence of the sounds of conflict that most of the interreligious, everyday peacebuilding took place. In reference to how the locals spoke of such periods of silence between the periods of violence, I describe the period that enabled organic and everyday peacebuilding as the *su aman-aman* period.

6.2.3 Su aman-aman. As briefly mentioned in the methodology chapter, my experience of studying the French language during my bachelor's degree influenced how I approached and perceived social phenomena during fieldwork. For people who happen to learn French as a second language or as foreign language, it is imperative to understand the importance of the past tense (le passé composé) and the imperfect (l'imparfait) when writing a story in the past, as in French, the use of *le pass*é composé allows us to point out specific actions that happened in the past, while the imperfect – *l'imparfait* simultaneously becomes the continuously moving background or the setting of the actions that took place in the continuum of the

past. In brief, to tell a story that happened in the past in the French language, interlocutors need to be conscious of the two sets of ways to describe the story. This association aims to give a glimpse of how language characterizes the society and the society (re)tells a story differently. Furthermore, it pushes the argument that an understanding of conflict narratives by associating them to story production and the logic of language can give more encompassing narratives of what happened in the society, which is one of the aims of this dissertation.

To understand how language and everyday peacebuilding intertwine, I would like to begin this subsection by outlining the characteristics of the transformation or the *su aman-aman* period. As opposed to the characteristics of the conflict period, the transformation period can be described through the collective act of travelling in agroup when they did not hear the sounds of the conflict. This especially happened in the case of Christians. The sequence can be interchangeable and complementary with other characteristics. For example, at first, when they would not hear the sound of the conflict, they would decide to go to the predominantly Muslim market or the borderline trade points. However, in order to decide to go to "dangerous areas", they had to calculate the risk by understanding the challenges along the routes. The more the risks, the more people needed to join the trip, as being surrounded by a group gave them more courage to face the risks. In short, during the conflict period or the highly tense period (as discussed in the previous chapter and referred as *panas-panas* period), people chose to avoid borderline and dangerous areas. Meanwhile, during the kind of safe period (*aman-aman* period), people travelled in group to borderline and dangerous areas with intention to purchase goods at lower price.

The second combination of characteristics was peace narratives, which were circulated among the traders, and the absence of

the sound of conflict. In the excerpt below, a female Christian respondent repeatedly used the phrase *aman-aman* to describe the situation, which according to her allowed her to go to the trade points. Even when I asked her again using the phrase *su aman* (with only a single *aman*), she rephrased it with *su aman-aman* (two times aman). In the context of the Ambon Malay language, doubling a word or reduplication with static intransitive verbs in this case the word "aman" (lit. safe/conducive) has several potential changes to the meaning of the word. Van Minde (1997) points out that this type of reduplication "is inflectional, adding a categorial meaning 'increased degree', 'plurality', 'durative', 'iterative', 'similarity'; or 'decreased degree'" (p. 119). Taken from the context how the reduplication of the word *aman* (safe/conducive) into *aman-aman* was used by the respondents, I argue that in the context related to economic exchange and period of conflict, it can mean "almost" or "kind of" to decrease the meaning of the word *aman* (safe/conducive) as well as to represent a durative sense in the way that the period of *aman-aman* lasted as the backdrop of the conflict period. Therefore, the phrase *aman-aman* does not mean that the situation was safe but that it was "almost" or "kind of safe"

> Respondent: "We were going out but were still afraid....It has already started to become kind of safe (mulai aman-aman), and we took the minibus....We had to be careful...but the minibus did not pass by Waihaong [a Muslim predominantly area]".
>
> Interviewer: (So you heard from other people when you reached Indojaya. It is already safe (su aman), already safe (su aman), right?
>
> Respondent: "Yes, everybody said that it was already kind of safe (su aman-aman)".

Nevertheless, this phrase should be seen as an emerging pattern not an absolute certainty. It shows a thin margin where the difference

lies only in one word and yet signifies a completely different situation. After I found that the difference between *su aman-aman* and *su aman* persisted in the data analysis, it became my main material during the data confirmation visit. I asked respondents from the Muslim and the Christian communities what they thought about these words. During the interviews, I tried to replace *kerusuhan* and *konflik* ("riot" and "conflict') with *waktu panas-panas* (Chapter 5). Similarly, when they were engaged in the stories about the conflict, I used the phrase *su aman-aman* to ask when the situation was not violent. With people on the ground who mostly shared their experience of practicing or were mostly exposed to everyday peacebuilding, the storylines went on smoothly. The phrases *panas-panas* and *su aman-aman* became demonstrative phrases to mark certain periods during the conflict.

Subsequently, I continued the interview by asking some sort of questions such as "taon 2004 itu su aman kah? Atau masih aman-aman?" (was the year 2004 already conducive? Or was it kind of conducive?"). They could easily navigate the two phrases and provide stories that demonstrated a different phase of the conflict based on the phrases *su aman* and *su aman-aman.* However, a contrasting view came from one of the high-level official respondents. During the data confirmation visit, he insisted that the phrases *su aman* and *su aman-aman* refer to the same "already safe" situation. Further, he argued that it is part of the Ambonese culture for people to sometimes double a word to put emphasis on their intended meaning. While taking this negation to the interpretation of the data analysis, such statement in turn strengthens the main argument of this dissertation that peace at the grassroots level was perceived and navigated differently compared to middle and high-level officials.

> "And then it already started to be kind of safe (su mulai aman-aman), then the Christians started to sell on ... the street-side of the Amans Hotel....People were selling but they needed to be kind of alert," said Tante Feby, 65, a female Christian Ambonese (interview in June 2018).

As illustrated in the quotation above, the phrase *aman-aman* was frequently used to describe the exchange that took place for both the sellers and buyers. However, the sense of a "kind of" conducive state also forced them to stay vigilant and alert about possible attacks or violent threats. Therefore, it was a period of in-between where people were not sure whether it was safe and examined the situation through exchanges. How exchanges, especially at the market during the *su aman-aman* period could lead to building trust and recasting the situation perceived as conducive and normal by people at the grassroots level will further be discussed in the subsequent section.

6.3 Marketplaces to facilitate peacebuilding from below

6.3.1 Temporary markets and borderline trade points. This subsection highlights two conflicting roles of temporary markets and trade points during the conflict: to (a) foster trust-building and (b) hinder the larger efforts related to reconciliation. During periods of low intensity of violence, markets became the place where interactions through small-scale trading took place. However, as the number of violence reduced and people started to broaden their spatial access, some groups still wanted to take advantage of the elevation of commodity prices due to the inclusion of the security prices to the commodities.

> "The temporary market was indeed located on the street. The impact of the riots still exists, because back then, the market was burned down, so people made a sort of market on the sidewalk ... Yes, it was allowed in Batu Meja so that exchanges

> could take place," said former head of the Official Office of Industry and Trade of the Maluku Province, (interview in January 2018).
>
> "I remember her comment. At that time, the Secretary of Regional Development Bureau was Ida Salampessy, who officially stated, 'we have asked the municipality not to "manage/ coordinate [the trade activities outside of the designated places].' At the time, it was uncontrollable; they were trading on the streets and sidewalks. It was very chaotic as it disturbed the traffic, but they [the government] did it deliberately and let it be uncontrollable and disorganized as long as people got together and conducted as many common activities as possible. It was not a sort of omission; it was a deliberate policy. It was indeed planned," said a male Muslim Moluccan who is originally from Buru Island and was involved in the formulation of the background studies for the Inpres no. 6 in 2003.

From both the interview excerpts, it can be concluded that the government did know about the emergence of temporary trade points and markets in various places on Ambon island. At first, the government deliberately allowed and to an extent supported this irregular and illegal trade points, as illustrated from the interviews with the former head of the Official Office of Industry and Trade of the Maluku Province as well as a male Muslim consultant.

After the joint-agreement called the Malino II Peace Agreement was signed by both the conflicting parties, the Indonesian President Megawati Soekarno Putri a year later issued a Presidential Instruction (Inpres) no. 6 of 2003 in response to the proposal from the then Governor of Maluku Province, Karel Albert. The Inpres aimed to instruct all the coordinating ministries and ministries to prioritize recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction activities in their work plans, particularly for the Maluku and North Maluku Province. In addition, they also had to prioritize budgets for Maluku and North Maluku over a three-year period between 2004 and 2007. This instruction later became the basis of the lower

scale recovery policies that were meant to revitalize local social and economic conditions as well as improve security within the region. With the implementation of this policy, the Civil Emergency status in Maluku was lifted.

Article 1 of the *Inpres* regulated the revitalization of economic infrastructure in both the provinces, the development of local economic initiatives, and the expansion of economic partnerships. By putting the rehabilitation of economic sectors above other issues, the government favored stabilizing the Ambonese society through an economic approach. Article 2 mentions the rehabilitation of security issues, which are followed by political issues and welfare issues, including those pertaining to the refugee crisis. The list continued, and each ministry was given priority agendas to work on. With this order, the local government got the funding to rebuild the regions, which included the reconstruction of places of worship and public facilities.

It was only in 2004 that the Ambon local government took the initiatives to send out an official order to various religious institutions so that the religious leaders could help encourage their followers to go to the "mixed" market, i.e., the Mardika Market. In addition, the order also regulated the closure of *pasar kagets* in Ambon. However, the attempts to regulate the *pasar kaget* did not easily diminish their existence. Some of them are even still operating today, although at more restricted hours. This shows how the market as an economically-driven social structure was not necessarily in line with the government's policy and peacebuilding efforts.

> "I directly asked the Official Office of Industry and Trade of Ambon City to conduct dissemination for whoever had a place (either a shop or other type of selling spots) outside of the market to report themselves and bring a formal letter or certificate if they still had them; otherwise, at least witnesses

> saying, 'I have a spot here and to my next she or he.' These three people proceeded and provided their testimony, which was then recorded," (Vice Mayor of Ambon, interview in January 2018)

Other efforts from the government also included simplifying traders' reintegration from the *pasar kaget* to the "mixed" or the Mardika market. The interview excerpt above illustrates how in attempts to move the traders from various irregular trade points during the conflicts, the Vice Mayor instructed the Official Office of Industry and Trade of Ambon City to provide special privileges to former sellers of the markets to return to the market because they were registered and paid rent to the government on a regular basis. Practically, experienced sellers could re-establish and revive the economic activities quickly as they had adapted to the situation at the market as well as revitalize the financial situation in post-conflict Ambon.

However, this policy was not without its controversies and setbacks. Many internal actors made use of this opportunity to manipulate their way into getting spots at the market. As a growing number of new small-scale sellers from various borderline trade points and *pasar kaget* also wanted to get the spot at the Mardika market, possessing strong social capital apart from following the formal procedure and family relationships became some of the main advantages that smoothened their way to get the spot at the market. This became a problem for new sellers who took up trading as an income-related coping mechanism in times of conflict. As it might sound contradictory to what has been mentioned previously, market actors, especially of the *pasar kaget,* also potentially prevented reconciliation between both the conflicting parties due to monopoly practice. Selling at *pasar kaget* provided them a lot of benefits and allowed them to monopolize both the commodities and the market

price. They wanted the *pasar kaget* to exist continuously. This also relates to the fact that most of the traders at the *pasar kaget* were not traders before the conflicts erupted. Therefore, if the Christian people had not gone to *pasar kaget* anymore, they most likely would have lost their jobs as traders. As the sense of peace or *aman* was attributed to the mixing of Muslim and Christian both traders and sellers at the central market, maintaining religiously segregated markets risked to portray a prolonged segregation and sustain the impact of conflicts where both communities were separated.

Apart from appealing the traders of the *pasar kaget* to move to the Mardika market, the government also established several new physical markets, for example, the Tagalaya Market. Moreover, as regards the non-state actors, the Baku Bae Movement helped in establishing several markets in Narnia village and Pohon Pule. The choice of these two areas was rooted in the already existing economic exchanges in these borderline areas during the conflicts. However, when the movement decided to formalize the trade points, the markets were soon abandoned by both the sellers and buyers, the markets did not operate in their maximum capacity. The same thing happened to the Tagalaya market, which was once a borderline trade point. The modernized version of the market, along with the changes in the transportation route around the Tagalaya market, did not attract buyers and sellers to conduct exchanges. These failures suggest that the external interventions regarding physical market spaces could undermine the role of the market as a trading place. At the same time, it demonstrates that the market does not only comprise of economic transaction per se but is influenced by the actors who performed the economic transactions at the marketplace, where another dimension of human and space becomes the subject. Changes in the market space directly affect the situation of the market. Some markets were left and abandoned by traders right after being revitalized and modernized in terms

of buildings, space division, building materials, etc. The shift of location, regardless of how short or long the distance have, could possibly affected the performance of the market, which is related to the idea of spatial stories embedded in borderline trade and the initial location of the market. Thus, the market is a very powerful yet fragile entity in the society.

> "So it was after the riots when the Christians started to sell there. The Muslim traders welcomed them like that, which meant that they were not angry at them. They were good to them". Tante Feby, 65, a female Christian Ambonese (interview in June 2018).

Once the exchange took place, the narratives of togetherness and brotherhood of the Ambonese people became the key element to bring the people participating in the exchange together. Apart from the pre-existing network and relationship in the past, reassuring each other of safety and offering to step in to the borderline areas and conducting trade in the proximity of each other slowly rebuilt the community contact that was lost during the *panas-panas* period. As emphasized in the excerpt above, the Christian sellers were cautious about the possible reaction from the Muslim sellers when they entered the borderline trade areas; however, as soon as the Muslim sellers responded positively and not in anger at them by welcoming them, the Christians were able to participate in an exchange with the Muslims in the same area.

6.3.2 Dangerous exchanges in conflict-demarcation areas. Before we further analyze the dangerous exchanges in the conflict borderline, I would like to highlight what motivated women to take up trade as their coping mechanism during the conflict. As briefly mentioned in the previous section, women were traumatized by living in poverty and disadvantages. They hardly understood why

people were fighting and the reasons for this deadly violence; what they clearly understood was that they lost their houses, family members, jobs, and were locked in their area with very limited access to get around. During the interviews, some said that women's position in the society gave them the privilege to conduct a dangerous exchange because they were seen as less threatening by the opposing party. This granted them an easier access to areas dominated by the other religion. This situation positioned women as contact builders and messengers between the opposing party and their larger communities, as they would verify rumors, prevent acts of provocation, and, most importantly, bridge the initial interaction in a relatively neutral setting. Their main reasons in undertaking this role were rooted in survival needs rather than conscious attempts to resolve conflict. Moreover, women contributed to cementing reconciliation initiatives.

Despite their strategic roles during the conflicts, respondents also argued that women were also vulnerable to threats and, worse, death. An example was a respondent according to whom when the situation would suddenly become tense, the Christian sellers would leave their goods and the Muslim sellers would take over the goods and help in selling them. If the situation would permit, the income from the selling would be given back to the Christian sellers when they would return to the market. Such practices are common even to this day. This can be explained by the exclusivity of the people at the market and the difficulty of gaining access to trade spots at the market. Maintaining good relationships with neighbouring traders was a common sensical strategy that was applied by traders to survive in the market. In addition, it was known that bad precedent at the market would lead to a breach in the mutual trust, which is the fundamental relation among people, especially those working in the informal sector where network and social capital became the main asset to stay in the business.

> "They have faith that the person, at the right time will come back to pay"
>
> "Yes, the structure of the market happened that way under such circumstances, and then the network was built. There was a functioning social sanction: if you don't fulfil the promise, the next time you enter their area, you will be ignored. Therefore, they need to trust each other. If they agree to pay the next day, then the next day they have to come and pay," Pieter Soegijono, academic at Maluku Indonesia Christian University (interview in October 2017).

In his interview, Pieter Soegijono pointed out the social sanction that is to be applied if any party breaches the promise such as by being ignored and not being trusted to take goods from. It might sound simplistic, but as a market is a small and exclusive entity, people talk to and about each other, which is why gossip can spread out easily and fast. Breaching one's promise cannot only impact one's relationship with one person but jeopardize one's relationship with the rest of the market actors also. As the Ambonese people have preserved an oral tradition, they have been accustomed to perceive that a spoken promise is a legitimate promise. Therefore, being held accountable for what one says is very important among people at the market.

> "Those were settled people. Meanwhile, these people needed food to survive, so they went out to cultivate interactions. Humans are socially dependent; we need to live side by side ... and it started from a transaction by saying, 'Well, let's stay here together.' Now, it can be seen how the Muslim women wearing scarfs are with the Ambonese mama wearing *kebaya* [traditional female clothes]," said Opa Rino, nearly 60, a Catholic Ambonese (interview in June 2018).

The excerpted quotation above from a Catholic Ambonese depicts how most of the organic social mechanism at the market,

ranging from trusting each other's goods and protecting each other during sudden attacks, relied on the basic idea that humans are socially dependent on each other. To cultivate it, not only by action but also helping each other when in need is also required. This was expressed by language and everyday narratives. Opa Rino deliberately mimicked the common narrative of interreligious invitation in order to rebuild trust by living side by side on a daily basis by saying, "Well, let's stay here together." If only the logic of economic competition and monopoly of immediate profits had been employed, such a phrase would not have been used. This indicates that the bigger aim was to achieve a more stable society than to earn the largest profit for one's sake in a given moment. As these sellers understood that restoring peace and stability in the Ambonese society would restore stability at the market in terms of the number of buyers and the extent of access to the commodities, it was in their interest too that both the conflicting communities halt the violence and return to normal.

> "Some said, 'Go sell there!'...They did not want to respond, which prevented fighting from taking place again....Nevertheless, there were Muslim individuals who also did not want [the riots] again....They said they have been suffering to death...because those who went shopping were our people [the Christians].... the Muslims shopped less...so whom would they get the money from?...The Christians bought stuff in bulk," said Tante Feby, 65, a female Christian Ambonese (interview in June 2018).

Evidently, the claims of Opa Rino were also supported by Tante Feby, who emphasized the mutual dependency of Muslims and Christians in the market. Both the communities suffered during the conflicts. Muslims lost their buyers while Christians were banned from entering the market. Meanwhile, Christians could not fulfil their basic needs, especially related to food. Such constraints initiated resilient efforts among members of both the communities

to navigate their ways in order to reconcile with their opponents and revive the economic exchange.

In the previous subsection, I highlighted various statements that support how the market, trade points, and exchange interplay in the transformation periods. Moreover, to complement the emic perspective with a reflection from outsider actors, I cited a statement from a Muslim development consultant who was involved in the formulation of background studies for the Presidential Instruction no. 6 in 2003. He shared his point of view regarding the position of the government in relation to such grassroots initiatives:

> "I personally think that the market became the catalyst to putting the reconciliation process in the mainstream; hence, it all started from there, although the trigger [of the conflict] also started there, and a sort of a snowball effect started towards other processes...although actually, the stakeholders did acknowledge that the market was the stimuli for making the reconciliation process mainstream...and we were in the Bappenas. The [National Development Bureau] did think that too. The areas outside of the conflict were contained. Then, we internally started with the borderline areas because we saw economic activities in the market. That's it," says a male Muslim Moluccan who is originally from Buru Island and was involved in the formulation of the background studies for the Inpres no. 6 in 2003 (Interview).

In line with above argument, Ansori et al. (2014) referred to the reconstruction of the Mardika market as one of the government's most fully realized programs, as this reconstruction allowed inter-community interaction in strategic open spaces. They stated, "The revival of the markets generally intends to attract various communities to come and foster communications as well as interaction through the trading process" (p. 66). The reconstruction of the market also contributed to the strengthening of brotherhood, thereby fostering social harmony.

6.5 Summary of the chapter

The chapter demonstrated that everyday used words emerged as repeated narratives in the society and were crucial in the lives of the survivors of the conflicts. In this chapter, I incorporated the everyday narratives of people at the grassroots who distinguished conflict and the *su aman-aman* situation based on the sounds of the conflicts. This chapter also revealed the ambiguity that was often presented in the conflict and peace studies in which the periodization of the conflicts tended to generalize the everyday reality, where the start and end of the conflict were determined by the intensity of the violence. In the case of Ambon, the periodization of conflicts ranges from 1999 to 2002 with the Malino II Peace Agreement to mark the end of the conflict. Other studies pointed out the conflicts lasted from 1999 to 2004 with the last riots broke out due to the commemoration of the South Maluku Republic (RMS). This resulted in false assumptions about the constant danger pervading the conflict-stricken areas and that stable situation was only happened at the end of the conflict period. I argue that there are two periods: the *panas-panas* (the period of the conflicts) as it has been discussed in Chapter 5 and the *su aman-aman* or transformation period, in which both periods intertwined to each other.

In conflict-related temporalities, instead of being sequential to each other, the two periods (panas-panas/during conflict and su aman-aman/transformation period) are overlapping to each other in its spatial and time dimension. The conflict period (panas-panas period) was identified by the events and incidents that caused the conflicts to escalate and the presence of the sounds of the conflicts, whereas the *su aman-aman* period depicted a slower movement in the background setting of the everyday realities over the course of the conflict period - without the presence of the sounds of the conflicts. During this *su aman-aman* period, economic exchanges ranging from a small-scale trade to larger goods distribution mostly

took place as pointed out by most respondents. Moreover, in this period, the borderline areas became temporary trade points, and as a way to generate income within the Christian communities, the temporary markets in the Christian areas mushroomed. That being said, the *su aman-aman* period does not constitute the post-conflict period or mark the end of conflict period. Meanwhile, the period when people feel 'already safe' which in the emic term is called *su aman* (lit. already safe) will be elaborated in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7

Traders, Trade, and Marketplaces during the *Su Aman* Period

7.1 Introduction

"Justice, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder and can be interpreted in a variety of ways." (Weinstein & Stover, 2004, p. 4)

In a society affected by communal violence, what if, just like justice and beauty, peace is in the eye of the beholder and can be interpreted in a variety of ways? This question halfway answers the unfinished debate on when the peaceful period of the transformation stage began, as given in the previous chapter. In addition, it provides a middle ground between how the locals define peace and the degree to which the scholars, policymakers, and practitioners relate to the local people's notion of peace. Understanding the elements that characterize peace allows us to prioritise the emic views rather than these etic views, by focusing on how the internal members consider peace in their society based on their perspectives and on their own terms. In doing so, as this dissertation is focused on the marketplace, trade, and traders, I elaborate further on the development and interplay of these three elements throughout the peacebuilding and sustenance process in Ambon after 2004. Before focusing on the current issues, it

is important to first understand the market, trade dynamics, and traders' roles in bridging the conflict and transformation period to lead to the current situation.

This chapter aims to depict the positionality of the traders, trade, and marketplaces in the post-conflict Ambonese society. The details related to each element are crucial for fostering our understanding about their interrelationship and how they, arguably, bring about stability and rebuild trust, thus contributing to building peace in Ambon. Although the chapter is focused on the Mardika market, which is the main mixed-religion market in Ambon, the development and dynamics of each area outside the Mardika market will also be discussed.

First, the post-conflict period is defined as it is the backdrop of this chapter.

7.2 Post-Conflict Period

For clear periodization of the Ambon conflicts, I refer to this post-conflict period by using the local terminology "*su aman*" or "already conducive," signifying the relatively safe status of society wherein interreligious encounters took place with relatively little effort. This period started in 2004 and was marked by two local events: the final riots of April 2004 and the municipality orders issued to re-integrate traders into the mixed markets and disperse the temporary markets that mushroomed during the conflict period in the Christian areas. The first event represents the last high-intensity violent outburst in Ambon and is the most referred to account in the existing conflict-related studies, whereas the link between the market re-integration orders and the peacebuilding process, while mentioned in the literature on the Ambon conflicts (Al Qurtuby, 2016), has not been fully explored. The below excerpt of an interview with two Christians female inhabitants of the Benteng area indicates that,

according to them, the post-conflict period, marked by the use of term *su aman* (already conducive), started in 2004.

> It has been already safe (su aman) for how long, the riots happened already dozens of years. Nineteen, nineteen." (Tante Feby, personal communication, June 2018)
>
> Already safe (su aman) has lasted for fourteen years. In 2004 it became safe, right. (Noni, personal communication, June 2018)

Tante Feby, a former bread maker and seller at Benteng Market, stated that the situation has been stable and conducive to peace since 2004; i.e., for 14 years, considering the interview took place in 2018. She also recalled that the conflict first broke out about 19 years ago in 1999. She used the word *su aman* to refer to the shift in the conflict period. Simply put, the term refers to an absence of violence. However, by stating that 2004 marked the post-violence period, she neglected the fact that several incidents re-occurred in Ambon: the largest reported incident occurred in 2011 when a Muslim motorcycle driver was found dead in a Christian village of Gunung Nona. This incident instigated riots in several hotspots of Ambon island, such as the borders of the Batu Merah and Mardika villages, Gunung Nona-Batu Gantung (Christian area), and Waihaong-Talake (Muslim area) as well as the University of Pattimura (Braeuchler, 2015; Krause, 2018). Recent study by Rohman (2019) took the year 2011 as part of the episode of Ambon conflict.

One of the male Christian respondents was a victim of a riot; his house was burned down in September 2011. Fortunately, no one was harmed. He stated that this incident took place around the time of his birthday as well as the launch of his non-governmental organization focused on education development in Maluku. Previously in 1999, he and his family also had to evacuate due to an attack on his neighborhood, which resulted in their house being

completely burned down. Therefore, conflict-related trauma is deeply ingrained in his memory. His house is indeed located in a hotspot—the border between Batu Merah and Mardika, separating highly tense communities. This was also the area in which the conflicts first broke out in 1999.

The head of the Mardika market provided a statement on the start of the period conducive to peace, and an interview excerpt is given below. He did not use the grassroot level term *su aman* but mentioned similar activities indicating a stable situation in Ambon.

> Around the year 2004—yes, 2004, if I am not mistaken—through various existing communities, the traders here formed what the Ambonese called Pasar Baku Bae (Baku Bae Market). The area started from the entrance of Amans Hotel, and there, on the T-junction, there was a market, on that corner, only on that corner. (Head of the Mardika market, personal communication, December 2017)

Rohman (2019) recently published a study focusing on the social movements in Ambon post the conflicts, i.e., 2012 onwards. His research focuses on the Ambonese peace movement in which he found that the actors extended the everyday peace frame to social change, in which the actors share common goals and past experiences to develop Ambon collectively. In his research, he also emphasizes that friction and dispute are inavoidable within the peace movement actors, it requires continuous adjustment to the common goals and strong trust to resolve the frictions. He posits the study to focus on the contemporary Ambon after 2012 as the post conflict period. However, this research does not exclusively incorporate the year 2012 as conflict marker period because most of the respondents did not automatically recall such an incident as having a significant impact on their societal and communal relationships. Especially the people who did not live in areas involving violence

in September 2011 and May 2012. Although, a group of Christian sellers from the Lilibooi village said that they had to return to the Benteng market during the riots in 2011. Other sellers decided to take a break from selling their goods at markets during this time. As the riots did not last long and the trading communities at the Mardika market were securely established, stability could be quickly restored. Therefore, to align with the narratives related to trade, marketplaces, and traders, I adopt 2004 as the pivotal year for the peacebuilding process and the start of the post-conflict period or, as the local repeatedly referred to it, the *su aman* period.

7.3 Traders and Other Market-Related Actors

Now that the *su aman* period has been established, this section is dedicated to understanding the various actors present at a market. Of the thousands of people who occupy the market areas on a daily basis, I identified 26 types of actors. I am aware that this number could oversimplify the layers of positions held by these people in a hypothetical hierarchical and organizational marketplace structure. The word "hypothetical" serves to provide an etic understanding of the actual hierarchy of the market structure; it stems from a comparison of the types of jobs and names of jobs commonly found in related literature. However, some of these job descriptions and names are not necessarily used by people at a market. At the emic level, the people know about the activities performed by themselves and others, but they do not necessarily use labels for these activities. For example, the market's night guardian has a strong association with thugs. However, I did not consider "thug" or "gangster" for the list of actors because they never referred to themselves as such and the locals used the word "guardian" or simply a third-person pronoun when mentioning this person or group. While I did not include the terms "gangster" or "thug" in the list, I retained the guardian's "extended" job description. This

ensures that the guardians' perception of their role is respected without any judgments and or labels that they are not comfortable with.

The actors were then divided into five main categories based on their function in direct relation to trade: 1) traders and buyers as the main actors of basic economic exchange and 2) other actors as the auxiliaries to trade, i.e., people working in the services, security, and market-related administration sectors. This section further depicts the various pull and push factors which underline the challenges and opportunities that each actor has to deal with prior to and after entering the marketplace. A table providing an overview of the job types, ethno-religious backgrounds, and gender divisions of each of these actors can be found in the appendices.

7.3.1 Who are the traders? The traders at a market can be divided into two main categories based on their mobility: itinerant or mobile retailers and fixed-shop retailers. The mobile retailers are generally small-scale traders who do not have a fixed place of business. They usually sell daily-use products and perishable items such as vegetables, fish, traditional snacks, and fruits. Due to the limited availability of trading space, they tend to limit the number of goods they sell during each trading session to lower the need for logistical inventory spaces. The number of goods that need to be sold determine their operational hours at the market. Usually, they begin selling their wares at dawn and finish between 10:00 and 14:00 depending on whether the goods have all been sold.

Meanwhile, fixed-shop retailers tend to rely heavily on strategic locations, although it is not always the case. Compared to mobile retailers, they tend to have a greater capital and inventory of products. However, the line between the two types of retailers may not be as clear-cut due to the presence of traders who do both.

Therefore, for the purpose of this dissertation, I determined a preliminary classification of four types of traders at the Mardika market: fixed sellers within the market's main building and shop houses; fixed sellers with kiosks located within the first outer layer of the main building or surrounding the minibus terminal; temporary or half-day sellers who usually sit or stand on the parking zone on the street; and temporary mobile sellers who hawk their goods on the street. An additional category includes the auxiliaries to trade, i.e., the distributors or supply agents who sell to the sellers at the marketplace, especially the direct distributors who tend to hold power as patrons and clients of the sellers.

This dissertation has previously included a discussion on the backgrounds of traders and their trading activities within and outside the marketplaces. At the Mardika market, quite a number of the traders came from outside of Ambon Island. Some of them rented rooms near the market and frequently returned to their respective islands. Others who lived on islands with proximity to Ambon preferred to go to the market and return home, possibly spending the night at the market if necessary. Understanding the diversity of the geographical origins of the traders is important in the context of the market. The previous chapters have shown how the conflicts caused religious segregation on Ambon Island. It was, and still is, common to associate a village or an area with the inhabitants' religious beliefs. Meanwhile, at the market, not only do people associate a village with religion but also with the crops that the inhabitants produce. For example, the fish merchants were primarily Bugis while the fish sellers and re-sellers were Butonese people from the island of Muna. Further, the cloth sellers at the night market in the minibus terminal area were primarily Butonese from the island of Buton. The native Ambonese, although limited in number, mostly sold fresh products, staples, vegetables, herbs, spices, and fruits. The Christian sellers were varied; some were

traditional mobile retailers called *papalele*, who could be easily recognized due to their traditional attire, and others were temporary or half-day sellers.

> There are people from Tial, there are people from Liang, there are Bugis people... and there are Butonese (Tante Feby, personal communication, June 2018)

The above interview quotation indicates the diversity among the traders with regard to their place of origin from the perspective of a Christian buyer who frequently visited the marketplaces. As she sold fried bananas in the Christian area, she visited the market to buy raw bananas in bulk almost every day. Hence, she got to know many of the banana sellers, who were mostly Muslims. She could also distinguish the origin of each seller or, at least, which village they came from. It is safe to assume that acquiring such knowledge would require frequent contact and interactions with the local sellers. Otherwise, she would have provided a generic response by denominating most of the banana sellers as being a mix of Muslims, migrants, and native Ambonese without mentioning the specific origin of the sellers. It was interesting to find buyers combining these multilayered sub-identities under a different label which, consciously or not, invited them to perform a lot of "identity" calculations at the market. For example, the Christian buyers knew that the majority of the sellers were Muslim, but among the Muslim sellers, there were those of their extended family who possess *gandong* relation with them, then these Muslim sellers could potentially become their preferred sellers. However, based on my observations, identity calculations do not always inform the rational or irrational choices of the buyers. I elaborate further on the basic human patterns at the market as well as the influence of space and infrastructure on the final choices of buyers in the next chapter.

7.3.2 Is becoming a trader a question of choice? For some, obtaining a job may have been a matter of choice, but for others, it exposed their bitter situation of having no other choice. The unemployment rate and poverty levels in Ambon significantly increased during the turbulent years, especially between 1999 and 2004. Muslims lost their jobs in areas dominated by Christians, and vice versa (Pamungkas, 2015). Thus, both the communities suffered from economic instability, resulting in the people getting displaced from their own city and becoming dependent on their savings, family support, and petty trade or other informal jobs. The unemployment rate remained as an important issue after the conflict came to an end as well (Adam, 2008). Migrants from outside of the Maluku province re-opened their businesses but rarely recruited local people, presumably due to their heavy distrust towards the locals, and this triggered the marginalization of the original inhabitants of Ambon. Since 2004, businesses have grown in the Muslim-dominated areas (e.g., Mardika Market, Ambon Plaza, Batu Merah, Jalan Baru, and Silale-Waihaong). Recent migrants dominated the market and arguably restricted the opportunities available for native Ambonese businessmen (Adam, 2008; Pamungkas, 2015; Van Klinken, 2007).

The high rate of unemployment in the Maluku province made it difficult for the economically active population to choose alternative jobs that aligned with their educational backgrounds, let alone their personal interests. In 2017, the unemployment rate in Maluku reached 9,28 %, and it was significantly higher than the national unemployment rate of the same year, which was 5,50%. The scarcity of job vacancies and limited availability of positions made building a long-term career even harder. Further, the information available to fresh graduates on the diversity of jobs and positions outside of the Maluku province was limited, which confined the fresh graduates to common jobs in Ambon. A

cultural alternative for understanding this situation is through the popular Ambonese Malay songs that involve negative depictions of living as a *perantau* (migrant), especially in big cities like Jakarta or Surabaya. These songs accentuate how these Ambonese migrants continuously longed for their homeland, and, to a certain extent, the songs underlined the stereotype that Ambonese boys could not live far away from their mother and constantly missed their mother when they were away (Kadir, 2008).

If leaving the homeland is not an option for these people, what kind of livelihood would they endure? One of my respondents, Darmin, a male Muslim Butonese high school teacher, said that his goal was to be a politician. As someone from a family of traders, his choice to become a teacher was already an outlier. Pursuing a career as a politician would alienate him further from the family norm. While becoming a successful politician could allow him to advance his career leaps, leaving his current socio-political economic status would consequently alter his status in his family. However, there were at least two things that hindered his path. The first was his ethnic background. Being a migrant, especially Butonese, seemed to reduce his chance to succeed in the political arena. Second, it was questionable whether he had enough social, symbolic, and financial capital to boost his political campaign. My interview with him took place in 2017; two years later, I saw his campaign pictures for the 2019 municipal parliament member election on his Facebook account. The election took place in April 2019, and his candidacy was not accepted.

In the periods prior to and during the conflicts, apart from relying on subsistence economy, the majority of the Moluccan society involved in the fishery and forestry as their predominantly main source of income. Most of the rural population fulfilled their basic needs through garden activities, which served two purposes: market-related production and household consumption. The

division of labor tended to be gendered; men were to cultivate the garden while women peddled the surplus food crops in their neighborhoods and local markets. Similar patterns also appeared in the fishery sector, where women were given the responsibility to peddle the fish catch. Meanwhile, the urban society developed different livelihoods, which were interdependent on those of the rural population. The latter's main income came from a variety of work sectors, such as services, trade, and manufacturing. The urban population relied on the local markets or small *warung6* (kiosk) for their daily needs.

However, due to modernization, industrialization, and urbanization, the social organization at the lower level of Moluccan society has gone through an inevitable shift, especially in its socio-economic aspects. Although the inflation in Maluku in 2017 was -0,05%, and was far lower than the national inflation rate of 3,61%, the gross regional domestic product of this province was IDR 39.879 billion (2,49 billion euro). Due to this, the Maluku province was ranked 31 out of the 34 provinces in Indonesia. As a background, the percentage of people working in the agriculture, forestry, hunting, and fishery sectors dropped by almost 20% over the last 15 years, resulting in a total of only 37.51% as of 2017. Meanwhile, the proportion of people engaged in wholesale trade, retail trade, and restaurant and hotel businesses steeply increased to 15.40%. A slight increase was seen in the service sector with 23.78% of the Moluccan people registered in it (BPS Provinsi Maluku, 2018).

Therefore, considering my first argument on the interreligious division of labor within the Moluccan society, it can be assumed

[6] Small stores were usually located in residential complexes, providing basic household needs. The commodities sold were varied and based on the needs of the neighboring population. Some sellers provided fresh vegetables, fish, and meat that they previously bought from the market. Others only sold manufactured, long-lasting goods, such as shampoos, detergents, soaps, etc.

that with fewer people engaged in agriculture, forestry, hunting, and fishery, fewer Muslim people relied upon these informal and traditional income generations for their livelihoods. Although the percentage of trade-related workers increased, since 2013, modern supermarkets and malls have become an alternative to small-scale trade at traditional marketplaces in Ambon. More people expanded their business by buying or renting selling spaces at these supermarkets while also keeping their kiosks at the market. Further, the emergence of supermarkets invited new, modern traders who had previously never traded in any market to take up the opportunity to trade. The employment rate of this sector also increased because each store hired shopkeepers. Meanwhile, retail chains (clothing stores and supermarkets) provided significant job opportunities for Moluccan people.

The rise of awareness about augmenting one's socio-economic status in society was a significant aspect of the Muslim intellectual middle-class group. In the methodology chapter, I mentioned that I worked with various students, mostly from Pattimura University, throughout the fieldwork period. In addition, I also had various chances to visit institutions all over the island and give talks on topics related to higher education. Surprisingly, I encountered a pattern among the respondents and other people I spoke to; their professional aims were to enter politics, just like Darmin. In Ambon, politics is a part of the everyday life of even the general traders at Mardika Market. I found that people were quite open to talking about politics and were frequently involved in discussions about political alignments, candidate profiles, and campaigns, among others. They closely followed the dynamics of the power struggle in Ambon City and Maluku Province.

The tendency of Muslim youths to be attracted to politics may be linked to the need for self-actualization, especially among the millennial generation. The growth of social media usage in the

province, especially in Ambon City, resulted in distance becoming fluid. The youth got inspired not only by the people they had met in person but also by virtual idols they knew online, including politicians and influencers. Internet-triggered "diseases" such as the fear of missing out (FOMO) have forced people to stay connected to the virtual world. They, too, want to be like those influencers who are continuously admired for their achievements and get appraised based on their personal, professional, and/or political successes. If the youths are to aim high in life, would becoming a trader at the marketplace be an option? It could be. But finding the links between the goals and the profession are challenging at present. Since the fieldwork conducted for this dissertation did not aim to capture such a phenomenon, this assumption is a conclusion based on everyday interactions with the locals during the 10-month period.

Another reason for the importance of self-actualization among the Ambonese people—especially the youth population—is the abundance of sociocultural and political activism in Ambon. Since their early years, the Ambonese have participated in or, at least, have been exposed to various NGO-led and government-led activities. They have also been exposed to campus politics from the first day of their university life, with some of their organizations being affiliated with religion, such as Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI/ The Muslim Students' Association) or Gerakan Mahasiswa Kristen Indonesia (GMKI/The Indonesian Christian Students Movement) among others. This attachment to sociocultural and political activism seems to have mushroomed since the outbreak of the 1999 violence as various organizations, from local to international, have put forward their initiatives to help reconcile and rebuild the island in the aftermath of the conflicts. On a broader scale, as briefly mentioned at the beginning of this section, the political awareness of Muslim students and youths was also influenced by

the larger discourse among the rising intellectual Muslim middle-class in Indonesia in general.

Upon entering Ambon City, one cannot help but notice the number of billboards "advertising" full-sized pictures of politicians all over the main streets. During occasions such as Christmas or Islamic Eid ul-Fitr, they're used to convey the politicians' greetings. Other times, they are used to welcome other elites visiting the island, such as the president, ministers, or head of the military or police forces. Each region or province has its own regulations on billboard usage. However, what caught my interest was how these massive billboards would influence one's perceptions, such as one's desire of becoming a politician. Having one's picture visible to all the people living on the island and beyond arguably provides a sense of prestige and pride. When I passed by one of the main streets of Ambon a few weeks before the gubernatorial election, I saw a 3 x 4 m billboard showcasing the candidates for the governor and vice governor positions. Such billboards were placed on each side of the 2-km road after every two or three meters.

> Here, in Ambon, they like to tell grandiose stories; they are the best for that ... they are great at it ... they are already over the moon [just by] having the phone number of the Governor, although they [would] never send any SMS to the Governor. (Hadar, personal communication, January 2018)

The desire for power is apparent among the people of Ambon in general. They believe that knowing the elites and sharing or bragging about the connection to others could increase their leverage within their friendship circle or professional network. Such a practice is also extended to the virtual world where many people proudly uploaded a picture or a selfie with high level officials, for example with the mayor, governor, vice mayor, vice governor, religious and customary leaders, chairmen of what-so-ever

organizations. The above quotation illustrates how an Ambonese would be overly proud of merely having the phone number of the governor. It emphasizes how, among the people of Ambon, bragging about being acquainted with the elites has become a common phenomenon. People are no longer surprised when one of their friends boast about themselves or how well they know the elites; they wouldn't believe it either.

The above stories contribute to explaining the shift in the job preferences and opportunities among the Muslim people of Ambon Island. The story of the Butonese teacher who decided to go against his family of traders and choose a different career, first as a teacher and then as a politician, hints at the equal opportunities available for Muslims and migrants to access the jobs perceived by society as highly prestigious. It reflects an upgrade of the BBM migrants who have always been associated with informal economy, blue-collar and poorly paid jobs before the conflicts (Adam, 2008b).

Meanwhile, the Christian youth respondents showed less enthusiasm for politics. This may be related to the tendency of Christians to maintain their status quo, resulting in few struggles and urges to achieve a higher societal status. In the aftermath of the conflicts, an increasing number of Christian youths took up blue collar, informal jobs and worked as pedicab or motorcycle taxi drivers, among others. The shift towards more a pragmatic mindset among the Christian youth was significant considering that they have been associated with the satirical expression "biar punggung patah, asal muka jangan pucat," i.e., "although your back is broken, your face should not be pale" (Kadir, 2008). This sentence is from an Ambonese Malay song that is circulated as a joke among the Christian groups and commonly known within the Muslim communities. It indicates that maintaining a positive self-image is important even if, in reality, one is struggling to fulfil their basic

needs. The shift in the mindset also applies to the female Christians as they are greatly involved in petty trade or market-based trade in general as compared to the period before the conflicts.

Despite the popular belief that trade skills and networks should be inherited, most of the parents do not want their children to become traders like them; they encourage their children to obtain a high level of education and become successful (as a civil servant or banker). Mama Joan strongly disagreed when I said that her daughter might take up her position as a trader at the market in the future. Most of the traders from her village chose to become a trader not necessarily because they inherited it from their parents or family but because of their family's needs. This is contrary to the studies on the *Papalele* traditional traders of Ambon island by Tupamahu (2012) and Soegijono (2011), who argued that the traders' decision to remain in this profession was strongly influenced by the need for self-actualization rather than economically driven motives. Through the current study, I found that their decision to become a trader was an outcome of household-level decision making and strategies as they were forced to become the breadwinner for their family. Such an argument was also proposed by Adam (2008). In his study of refugee camps in Ambon City, he observed the women's tendency to be involved in small-scale trade to generate household income. However, traditionally, the socially constructed dispositions in Ambon include the women's responsibility to be the family's breadwinner through trading activities while men occupy the gardens and ensure that they obtain cash crops that could be sold at the market the next morning. Therefore, if we conclude that the small-scale trade performed by women during the conflict and transformation periods was a coping mechanism, it neglects the traditional labor division within the communities.

7.3.3 What does it take to be a trader at the Mardika market?
During my observational study of the early-morning market (1–5 am), I found a lot of traders, irrespective of gender, staying overnight at the market. Some of the sellers arrived at the market at 8 pm with their vegetables but deliberately waited until 2 am to sell the goods at better prices. They usually finished selling their goods just before dawn, around 5 or 6 am. They did not seem to have any problems with sleeping outdoors near their sacks of vegetables and were confident that no one would steal their goods or conduct any other crimes. It was quite common for market actors to sacrifice their comfort or sleep for money. Therefore, the one thing a market actor needs the most is a strong and healthy body.

> From 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning until 9 or 10 o'clock at night, this market is crowded. Some of them even stay over at the market. They don't go home at all; there always are people around, non-stop. So, the market life actually never stops [keeps going], and that is how." (Taufiq, wholesaler originally from Medan, personal communication, January 2018)

Apart from the physical requirement, a seller's exposure to the dynamics, challenges, risks, failures, loss, and profits related to trading activities influenced their decision to take up the job. The Muslim children whose parents were traders or market actors were already familiar with the trading process and the market environment, having helped their parents with their jobs. As mentioned in the Context chapter, trade has long been associated with Muslim and Islam, for Islam was brought to Indonesia not by religious leaders but by traders from the Middle East. On the contrary, Christianity was introduced in Indonesia by missionaries during the colonial administration. This historical background helps frame the religion-based economic arrangements on the island.

The third factor is the availability of space to trade. Most of the Muslims were found to inherit their trade spaces from their parents, siblings, or extended family members. Zaini (28), a Muslim Butonese, started his journey as a chili and tomato seller by helping out at his brother's kiosk. He came from a family of farmers who transmigrated from Buton Island to Seram Island at the north of Ambon when he was a child. Three years ago, he moved from Seram to Ambon to rejoin his brother. After a year of Zaini learning the trading skills, his brother trusted him with a part of the responsibility of running the kiosk. Such a subtle promotion may not be evident to people outside of the marketplace as they outwardly seem to be the same as before. However, there is actually a ladder to climb in the market hierarchical structure.

Meanwhile, this system varies for the Christians. Oom Jan, one of the male Christian sellers at Pasar Mardika stated that he first bought a selling spot at the front of the market (the street side). Coming from the Hulaliu village, he possessed a *gandong* relationship with the Muslim Kailolo village. This apparently smoothened the process of obtaining a strategic space at the market. A former parking coordinator in Kailolo mentioned that there were indeed a lot of people from Kailolo and its *gandong*. Hence, having this cultural pact guaranteed Oom Jan's presence at the market as he had the support of his extended Muslim family. Later on, as his business flourished, he bought another spot a little further inside the market. He handed over the strategic spot (the street side) to his children and moved to less strategic spot inside the market. He was confident that he had formed a good rapport with various buyers, ensuring that they would be his frequent buyers (langganan in Indonesian). Therefore, according to him, moving to a less strategic place did not matter because the buyers still sought him out.

Oom Jan's success seemed to attract other Christian traders previously selling in temporary markets during the conflict period.

A group of female traders from Lilibooi, a Christian village, told me that Oom Jan was the one who made it possible for them to obtain a trading spot at the market. Initially, Oom Jan has been a seller at the Benteng market during the conflict, just like them. After the situation became *su aman,* he was offered a spot-on rent at the Mardika market, the only mixed market at that time. This led to Oom Jan pointing out a spot near Mandiri Bank for the female trader group to sell their goods. Although they did not pay rent, they had to pay a daily retribution amount to the market officers as well as to parking coordinator. Since then, the female traders visited the Mardika market at least twice a week on a rolling basisdecided among them. For example, each shift included five to seven people; one group went to the market every Monday and Thursday, and another group went to the market every Tuesday and Friday. There were also some sellers who visited the market three times a week: Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday. They deliberately did not go to the market on Sundays as those days were for religious worship.

> "They were good. They tagged along with the Christians to sell at the Amans market ... I don't know since when the Christians wanted to be with the Muslims ... but because the Christians used to sell alongside the Muslims, they were already used to it. They did not get angry. They accepted it because they had been friends in the past. They knew that everyone was searching for a source of income, and nobody wanted this to happen again. They had been friends for a long time, so when it happened—maybe they contacted each other through mobile phones or something else—when it was *su aman*, it was fine for them to come [to the market]. (Noni, personal communication, June 2018)

The quotation above provides another example of how the Christians maximized their pre-existing social capital or networks established before the conflicts to gain access to the market. Oom Jan's story about the female Christian traders from Lilibooi village

exemplifies the intrareligious relationship among the Christians, while the above excerpt indicates the presence of interreligious social capital between the Muslims and Christians. It depicts how the Muslim traders at the market invited and convinced the Christian sellers to join them in the vicinity of their trading spot. In the interview, Noni, the respondent, referred to the Amans market, which is the area that surrounds the main building of the Mardika market. References of the Amans market began after the burning of Mardika market. The name "Amans" came from the name of a three-star hotel called Amans, located next to the Mardika market. This hotel was once considered as the least risky place for a meeting point. During the conflicts, government officials from Jakarta usually stayed and held their meetings at this hotel. The market was present outside the hotel. Amans Market was not a real market; it was a borderline trade point where people gathered and set up their stalls, especially during the *su aman-aman* (kind of conducive) period.

> I asked them to accept the Christian *saudara-saudara* (brothers/sisters - ed) if they want to trade there [at the Mardika market - ed]. They [the Muslim traders] have to accept them [the Christian traders - ed] because it is their place even though there are not many of them. The Mardika market was dominated by the Muslims. (Ambon Vice Mayor, personal communication, January 2018)

Official efforts were also taken to foster interreligious co-existence at the market. Understanding the role of the Ambon marketplaces in lifting up the financial situation in Ambon, the vice mayor gave orders for the temporary markets in the Christian areas to be dispersed and the Christian traders to be re-integrated into the mixed market, Mardika. In the excerpt above, the vice mayor emphasized that the Christian traders had the same right as the Muslim traders to occupy spaces at the market. He also

acknowledged that, back then in 2004, the Mardika market was largely dominated by Muslim traders. The municipality's guarantee of the traders' entry into or return to the market may have increased the confidence of the Christian traders, enabling them to access the main market. But from the perspective of market actors, the government expended its efforts after the internal mechanism at the market had come through. Thus, the government's role was to guarantee the safety of the marketplaces and other trade areas with the help of the police and military. On the other hand, respondents also stated that the presence of military posts enabled people to meet and conduct economic exchanges, especially in borderline areas.

7.3.4 Is the buyer the king? There is an old saying in Indonesian: *pembeli adalah raja* (the buyer is the king). This expression influences the people's perception of who has more power at the market—the seller or the buyer. A Christian female respondent, Tante Feby stated, "now, those who dominate [the market] are the Christians who buy stuff in bulk" (personal communication). The idea that the Christians form the majority of the buyers is largely shared among the Muslims from the grassroots to elite levels. A male Muslim Butonese seller Zaini mentioned, "If we talk about the buyers, most of them are Christians. The Christians, when they go shopping, they buy a lot [in bulk]" (personal communication). A similar statement was also made by the former head of industry and trade of Maluku Province, "here in Ambon, many of the civil servants are Christian" (personal communication). This implies that many of the Christians work as civil servants and spend their time at their respective offices. They are unlikely to have any spare time to cultivate kitchen or home gardens and support their daily consumption. Therefore, they rely solely on the commodities

available at the market for their everyday household consumption requirements.

In contrast, the majority of the Muslims in Ambon engage in agriculture, fishery, or trading. The farmers depend on their food crops or go to the woods and collect natural products for household consumption and market commodities. Similarly, half of the daily needs of the fishermen are met by their own produce. Therefore, even if they need to buy staples or other types of food materials, their purchases tend to be minimal. Meanwhile, the role of the traders is interchangeable with that of the buyers, especially for those at marketplaces. Traders can easily become buyers by leaving their trading spots. During a morning trading session, I assisted a female Muslim trader who offered various types of vegetables that she bought from peasant sellers. Around noon, when most of the goods were almost sold out, she asked me to watch the spot and to take over the trading process while she went to buy fresh fish for her family. When she returned, not only did she have fish in a plastic bag but also some green leafy vegetables. This practice was also common among the Christian sellers. The money that they earned during the trading session was spent to fulfill their household needs; they often bought fish, vegetables that they could not cultivate in their gardens, and household utensils.

The different spending behaviors among the Muslims and Christians could also be related to the nature of their income generation. Those who engage in informal jobs earn money on a daily basis and usually in relatively small amounts. Having an informal job and relying on it despite oppositional forces outside their control results in these people carefully calculating their expenses, sometimes on a meta level. A different mentality is prominent among the people who have a fixed monthly salary as they are able to calculate and manage their budgets and household expenses in a more concrete manner. However, it is also important to note

that the socio-economic status varies greatly among the Christians, and income disparities are evident. In addition, as mentioned in the previous subsection, although the informal Christian workers are few in number, their job preference of informal jobs tends to increase.

7.3.5 Market-related actors. Apart from the different types of traders and buyers, there are various other formal and informal positions that are auxiliaries to trade. These range from services to security and administration.

Services. I identified 11 jobs that could be categorized as being service providers at the market. These actors include cart pullers, plastic bag sellers (they also offer to carry the buyer's groceries), trash collectors and cleaners, toilet guardians, stall helpers, minibus drivers, minibus passenger gatherers, motorcycle taxi drivers, pedicab drivers, truck drivers, and truck helpers. Some of these jobs are related to one another, such as a plastic bag seller/helper and cart puller, each serving as a stepping stone to access the other job. The helpers at the market were mostly kids and adolescents ranging from 6 to 14 years. They would offer big plastic bags to the potential buyers, and when their customers decided to buy the bags, they would offer an additional service as a helper. One of the helpers stated that he could earn around IDR 70.000 (4,5 euro) a day; he was 12 years old at the time. To provide a comparison, the minimum wage in Ambon was IDR 2.222.220 (140 Euro) a month in 2018 (Ministry of Manpower, 2018). Thus, by working as a helper at the market, he could earn as much as a civil servant with the government or a private worker. He told me that his older brother, who had been a helper when he was younger, had established the network for him and guaranteed his safety at the market. His brother was 17 years old at the time and worked as

a cart puller, a considerable higher position in the hypothetical hierarchical structure of the market.

Security. The security presence at the market is integral for ensuring its sustainability and to optimize trade exchanges. Without stability and security, the exchange process could easily be disturbed. In this subsection, the formal security actors—members of the military, and police as well as the municipality police—are identified. The informal security actors comprise of market night guardians. There is also a more hybrid form of security actors; these people were originally civilians but were then hired as fixed-term officers in semi-formal jobs adjacent to the military and police offices, such as Kamtibmas (Keamanan dan Ketertiban Masyarakat/community police officer).

The roles of the formal actors include restoring and maintaining order at the market, which is quite similar to their regular functions and roles outside of the market. They usually exercise their roles when a criminal incident occurs or when a dispute or riots escalate within the market area. The police also help the Ministry of Trade control the stability of the staple prices; for example, the price of rice. For this extended role, the police members form a task force, which frequently visits the marketplaces to check the prices of the staples. If traders were found to not comply with the benchmark price, their commodities would be confiscated. Of the four identified actors, I focus on two actors for a further explanation of their roles: the municipality police for the formal sector and the market night guardian for the informal sector.

As briefly mentioned earlier, the market security officers (municipal police) contribute to the dynamics of the market. These officers, called Satpol PP (Satuan Polisi Pamong Praja), work under the Office of Ambon municipality. In general, their main duties include assisting the mayor with security and public order, such as

by enforcing municipality regulations. This force is controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs and is different from the Indonesian National Police (Polri), but both the police and this force conduct cooperative duties within the local jurisprudence.

The following are some of their main duties and tasks related to the dynamics of the market:

i. Take actions against illegal street vendors, street beggars, and other individuals who may be a public nuisance.

ii. Control the use of public spaces and facilities operated by the local government.

iii. Supervise public affairs under the order of the local district or regional head.

iv. Enforce the local district or city rules and regulations following order by local leaders and ensure that the public complies with them.

The municipality police became the prolonged instrument of the Ambon municipality to ensure that buyers and sellers could perform trade-related activities at the market without disturbing or being disturbed by the traffic on the market's main street or by the flow of mini buses entering and leaving the terminal area. Based on my observations, the police strictly prohibited sellers from opening their temporary stalls on the street from 8 am to 12 pm (rush hours). After that period, sellers on the market's main street could freely open their stalls until the next morning at 8 am. But different rules applied to the sellers of clothes/shoes/accessories who opened their stalls in the terminal area—they were only allowed to do so after 5 pm. Before then, the terminal area had to be absent of any stalls so that the mini buses could park and wait for passengers within the area. Even though the regulations were clear, many of the sellers tried to find excuses to break the rules or negotiated with

the municipal police to open their stalls earlier or to move the stalls further away from the street. Some of these attempts succeeded but many failed and inevitably triggered small disputes to physical aggression between the municipal police and the sellers.

The interactions between the sellers and municipality police depict their power dynamics. It is hard to exactly categorize their dynamics; some shared an emotional bond due to their ethnic backgrounds, such as a Butonese identity. But at times, the police disregarded these familial relations when they were required to impose the regulations upon the sellers. Therefore, the sellers often had mixed feelings towards them. No matter how they behaved with the municipality police (for example, by giving the police goods such as vegetables and fish or sharing a cigarette), their goods would get thrown away if they resisted by selling their goods outside the borderline. This might sound normal because a citizen should oblige the regulations of law. But the sellers pointed out that the rules were ambiguous and could get confusing and frustrating; sometimes, they could bend the law without any repercussions, while at other times, they would get verbally assaulted, pushed aside, their trays kicked, and more.

The sellers said that they constantly felt insecure about how to behave every day. They were constantly forced to conduct space negotiations but without any constant power stances or sources. Such negotiations were inevitable on a daily basis. On the one hand, the sellers strived to maximize their trading spaces in an attempt to attract buyers by showcasing the range or sheer number of goods they had. On the other hand, the municipality police were expected to comply with their job descriptions. Therefore, the sellers employed various strategies to balance out the tension between them and the municipality police. As one respondent conveyed, personal approaches with small talk, jokes, and gifts; additional tips

especially during special occasions; and the accentuation of their ethno-religious similarities were some of their strategies.

The second group that also maintains order at the market comprises of the night market guardians. To ensure complete coverage of the security area, the Mardika market is divided into several security zones, and each zone is overseen by one guardian. The division is on the basis of the various sides of the market, i.e., the front, the back, the minibus terminal, etc. It provides a practical approach for better coordination among the guardians. For instance, one of my respondents, Firdaus, who was once a market guardian, said that he used to work in the first outer layer of the Mardika market, towards the front side. When I spoke to Firdaus, the former guardian at the market, the new guardian passed by. Firdaus then introduced me to the new guardian. That was one of my very first visits at the market during the night, and I felt lucky that the paths led me to meet these two persons at the same time, the custodians of the Mardika market. In the end, I only pursued to interview with the former guardian and succeeded to build a good rapport with him and his entire family who most of them are traders at the market.

As an Indonesian, being introduced to the guardian of a place, especially places considered as either sacred or risky, was similar to obtaining the formal permission letters to conduct research there. Once the guardians knew of my presence, the purpose of my research, and the activities I would be undertaking around the market, I was set for my fieldwork. It is common knowledge among people who work in risky environments that in addition to obtaining a formal permission letter from the government, *greeting* the custodian of the place in question is crucial. A similar experience was shared by Soegijono (2011), who conducted research at the Mardika market. It was initially challenging for him to find traders to interview. He was then introduced to 'the important person'

of the market; in his case, it was the extended hand of the elite officials. Subsequently, the traders became more open to him. I believe my introduction to the right people and involvement in the trading process of the guardian's family helped facilitate most of my interviews with traders at the market.

I observed that the guardians would usually come to the market after 9 o'clock in the evening. They would stay there overnight and return to their house at dawn. During the day, some of them would take up daily jobs, primarily informal roles such as being a motorcycle taxi driver. To make use of their guard service, each trader had to pay a minimum of IDR 2000 for their stall every day, and the fee would increase depending on the size of the kiosk/stall and the worth of the commodities. Their services resemble an insurance company's system, i.e., the guardians would be responsible for and indemnify losses or thefts. A Muslim seller who owns a kiosk at the market said that he once lost a sack of garlic and the guardian replaced it. Although the Muslim seller understood that replacing the loss was a part of the guardian's responsibility, the seller felt uncomfortable accepting the replacement. He believed that the money he gave the guardian everyday was a minor amount compared to the guardian sacrifice of staying up all night and maintaining order and security at the market.

Administration. The last category of market-related actors comprises of those who work in the administration. It includes the government officials as well as community-based organizations at the market, some of which are registered whereas others are not. In the Mardika market area, there are two separate market administrations for the Mardika market and Arumbae fish market, respectively. The Batu Merah market is located next to this area, with the two areas separated only by a small river. However, in terms of administration, the Batu Merah market is a completely different entity. The administrative offices for the Mardika market

and Arumbae fish market are located within a white building at the Mardika market. They comprise of at least seven employers, two heads of the market units, three officers responsible for collecting the daily retribution amounts, and two administrative staff in total. The market unit is a part of the Industry and Trade Official Office of the Ambon municipality, which manages the day-to-day market administrative processes, addresses problems related to the traders and buyers, and collects retribution fees from the traders.

Apart from governmental administrations, the traders also belong to different ethno-based groups and organizations. Two of the identified groups are from the South Sulawesi Province (Bugis, Makassarese, Bone, etc.) and Southeast Sulawesi Province (Butonese). Other than these regional groups, a formal organization called APKLI (Asosiasi Pedagang Kaki Lima Indonesia/Indonesia informal traders association) has also been established but is said to be problematic among the traders and in the eyes of the government. APKLI was accused of extorting money from the traders in return for protection and access to space at the market. Various discussions with the traders at the market and information from the local newspaper revealed that there was a clash between the traders and board members of APKLI in 2008, following which, the Butonese traders decided to withdraw themselves from the organization. In light of such incidents, the traders, especially the migrants, asked the municipality government to end the thug epoch at the market. The government responded by suspending any activities related to the association. However, during my fieldwork, I once saw a man wearing a black jacket with APKLI written on it. When asked some of the traders at the market about him, they did not know that the organization was operational again.

Further, in 2008, a joint military force called Yonif Gabungan (Yon Gab) was established at the Mardika market and given a permanent office on the first floor of the white building,

overlooking the Wijaya Hotel on the rear side of the market. Next to this military post, the police and municipality police were also provided with similar office spaces. The area near the Wijaya hotel and the small T-junction that bridges the Mardika and Batu Merah market areas was once the most dangerous part of the market as gangsters had claimed the space as their turf.

7.4 Mardika Market

In the city of Ambon, there are at least eight main fixed markets: Pasar Mardika, Pasar Batu Merah, Pasar Lama, Pasar Buah Pelabuhan, Pasar Wayame, Pasar Wayheru, Pasar Passo, and Pasar Tagalaya. Meanwhile, most of the temporary markets (pasar kaget) which mushroomed during the (*waktu) panas-panas* and *su aman-aman* periods have now vanished, but there were previously at least three *pasar kaget* in Ambon City, namely Pasar Batu Meja, Pasar Batu Gantong (now Pasar Tagalaya), and Pasar Suhema.

Mardika Market is situated in a three-storey building. The ground floor is designated for various commodities, the first floor is primarily for clothing stores, restaurants, and beauty salons, and the second floor consists of secondhand clothing stores and a mosque. The market is a home or second home to various workers, irrespective of whether they are directly involved in the trading transactions or support the trading activities in general. The width of the market is 450 meters, the left side or the longer side of the market rectangle is 200 meters, and the shorter side or the right side is 160 meters. This includes the area of the Arumbae fish market, which is located within the Mardika market area. In total, the market size is around 81.000 square meters. The map below shows the location of Mardika Market in the heart of the Central Business District of Ambon City and is represented by red spaces along the coastline.

In historical account on Ambon settlers, the origin of the word Mardika came from Sanskrit word *mardhaheka,* translated into 'free persons' or 'freed persons' (Bakhuizen van den Brink, 1915; Leirissa, 2000, p. 249). In addition, van Minde (1997) specifies the community in question referred to the "Christian Moluccans who had followed the Portuguese in their flight from Ternate to Tidore" (p. 4). However, most respondents have little to no knowledge about the origin of the word Mardika.

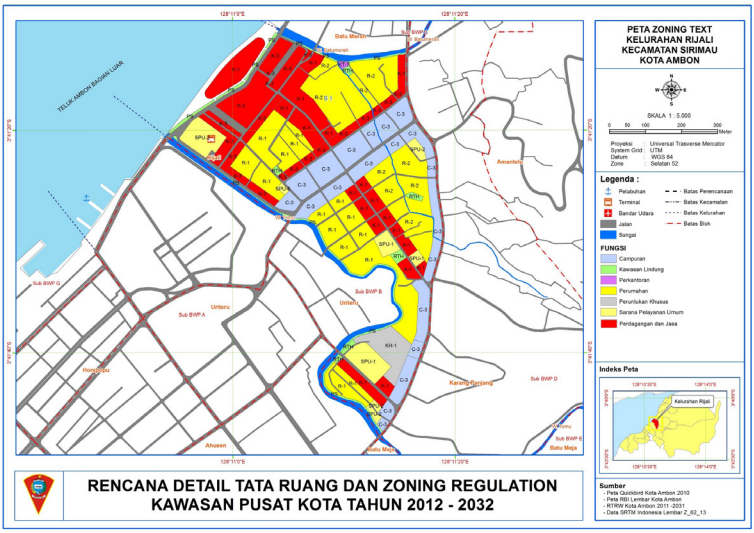
The Mardika market is arguably open for 24 hours. Some stalls and kiosks, especially on the street side near the Arumbae market, function as shelters for the kiosk owners. Although some traders pack their goods inside their kiosk and close down the front, other sellers leave some goods outside and leave the light on in anticipation of late-night and early-morning buyers. The Mardika market starts to accommodate a crowd of buyers and sellers from 5 am onwards, and most of the temporary half-day sellers buy vegetables from the farmers who sell their produce in the early morning hours (1 or 2 am). Most of these farmers set up their stalls at Batu Merah Market, which is located next to Mardika Market. The farmers are from various areas of Ambon, but most of them are Butonese Muslim migrants. As illustrated in the table below, the operational hours of the Mardika market vary based on the side of the building being covered as well as the types of sellers. The operational hours of the Batu Merah market have also been included in the below table as they are also related to the purchase of commodities by the temporary sellers at the Mardika market.

Figure 7 The operational hours of the Mardika and Batu Merah markets

Activities	Period					
	4 - 5	6-8	9-12	13-17	18-21	22-3
Mardika market						
Sellers at kiosk along the Mardika market street	■	■	■	■	■	■
Temporary half day market	■	■	■			
Fixed sellers inside the market's main building and shophouses		■	■	■		
Fixed sellers with kiosks located in the first outer layer of the white building		■	■	■	■	
Fixed sellers with kiosks located surrounding the minibus terminal			■	■	■	
Temporary mobile sellers	■	■	■	■	■	
Batu Merah market						
Farmers coming to the market					■	■
Temporary half day sellers from Mardika market buy produce from farmers	■					
Vegetable mobile sellers who hawk their goods door to door by motorbike	■					

Source: a compilation of data collected during fieldwork, based on interviews, document research, and FGD

Figure 8 A detailed map of the spatial planning and zoning regulations in Downtown Ambon between 2012 and 2032



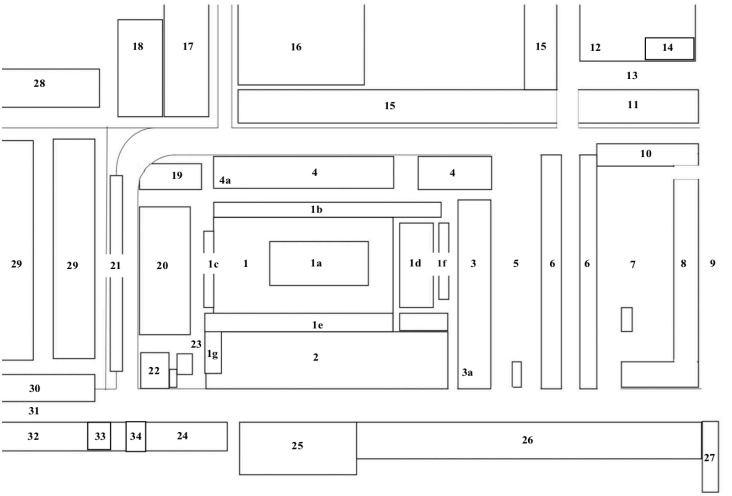
Source: collected from the Official Office of Planning and Public Works of Ambon City.

One of the most challenging aspects of the fieldwork was creating an actual map of the Mardika market. The original, official plan of the Mardika market obtained from the head of the Mardika market unit was not sufficient for an accurate depiction of the market. The two maps may even seem to refer to two different areas. The official map only showcases the white building or the main building of the Mardika market. But in reality, many of the kiosks, especially on the first floor, were either abandoned or used as shelters by the traders. Almost every passage on the ground floor is now occupied by sellers with their half-meter wide stalls embedded in the main kiosks, providing a narrow space for buyers to pass through the alleys.

My first attempt to map the market involved walking from the outermost area and identifying the kiosk lines as well as the commodities available at each kiosk. Referring to de Certeau's approach to space mapping, this spatial tour approach not only failed to provide a clear picture of the market but also neglected the logic behind the messy and unorganized spatial expansion. Finally, instead of trying to reconstruct the marketplace, I tried to deconstruct it by following the logic behind the market development. The map drawing started with the main building (the white building), which was then extended to the first outer layer of the market that consists of covered areas with kiosks and stalls. New buildings such as the Arumbae fish market were built on the coastline across from the white building, followed by the fruit kiosk area and the smaller passages near the minibus terminal. The trading space continuously grew despite the constant size of the actual marketplace. The small-scale traders tended to compress their spaces, resulting in further mobility along the lanes.

Figure 9 The official plan of the Mardika market issued by the Industry and Trade Official Office of Ambon City (first and second floors)

Figure 10 The current and actual plan of the Mardika market area.



Source: primary data collected through observational and mapping fieldwork.

1. White building/main building
    1.a. Ground floor middle area: phone shop, phone services, accessories, photo printing services
    1.b. Ground floor left side: household (manufactured) products such as pillows, bolsters, and woman's bags and clothes
    1.c. Ground floor rear side: staple kiosks, small restaurants, toilets, tailors
    1.d. Ground floor outside the white building: clothes, shoes, bags, and a few staple kiosks
    1.e. Ground floor outside the white building: clothes, staple kiosks, and phone shops
    1.f. Shophouses: clothes and small restaurants
    1.g. Shophouses: staple kiosks
2. Covered kiosks and stalls located outside and adjacent to the white building: vegetables, fruits, herbs, and spices
3. Shophouses: wholesale clothes and shoes, small restaurants
    3.a. Kiosks and stalls: vegetables, fruits, and traditional snacks made of sago
4. Covered kiosks and lodges located outside and adjacent to the white building: clothes, shoes, and woman's accessories
    4.a. Kiosks and stalls: vegetables, fruits, staple, herbs, and spices
5. Minibus Terminal I (known as Terminal Tantui): serves as a minibus terminal during the day and turns into the night market from 4–5 pm to 9–10 pm
6. Clothing stalls, phone shops, electronic shops, barbershops
7. Minibus Terminal II (known as Terminal Lin III or Terminal Talake): serves as a minibus terminal during the day but turns into a night market from 4–5 pm to 9–10 pm

8. Kiosks: phone shops and small restaurants
9. Minibus Terminal III (known as Terminal Kayu Putih)
10. Shophouses: clothes, accessories, and small restaurants; the second floor consists of rented dormitory houses for the traders
11. Shophouses: bars, karaoke places, phone shops
12. Shophouses: secondhand clothes, toys
13. Minibus Terminal IV (known as Terminal Karpan)
14. Stalls: pork and dog meat
15. Shophouses: clothes, accessories, household (manufactured) products, secondhand clothes, and toys; the second floor consists of rental dormitory houses for the traders
16. Amans Hotel
17. Kiosks: second hand clothes
18. Wijaya Hotel, shophouses, and lodges: clothes, staples, accessories, vegetables, fruits, etc.
19. Shophouses: vegetables, staples, and fruits; houses for the traders on the second floor
20. Shophouses and stalls: vegetables, fruits, household products, and staples; some of the shops are used as shelters/seller's houses
21. Kiosks and lodges: fruits
22. Mandiri Bank
23. Kiosks and stalls: vegetables, staple, and fruits
24. Kiosks and lodges: vegetables, fruits, and tubers
25. Arumbae Fish Market

26. Stalls and lodges: vegetables, fruits, smoked fish, tofu and tempeh, staple, tubers, etc.
27. Port for speedboats to Wayame and Kampung Jawa

Batu Merah Market

28. Shophouses, kiosks, and lodges: clothes, staple, vegetables, fruits, and accessories
29. Shophouses: wholesale staples and spices (shallot and garlic), storage spaces, wholesale clothes, wholesale accessories, wholesale household (manufactured) products, etc.
30. Kiosks and lodges: fish, vegetables, and fruits
31. Drop-off zone for the products to be distributed at the Batu Merah and Mardika markets
32. Kiosks and lodges: fish, vegetables, fruits, spices, tubers, small restaurants, and coffee kiosks
33. Mainusu Café
34. Police office

The above map is a sketch of the spatial arrangement of the Mardika market. This figure does not aim to depict the actual comparative size of each part of the market. Obtaining an exact measure of each corridor or trade space was not the main purpose of this mapping process. This sketch is aimed at providing a general depiction of the division of commodities at the market. As most of the parts are the result of formal and informal extensions, the map allows us to compare the initial plan and the actual condition of the market as well as understand how a market, as a space, is indeed a social product. The space grows without an expansion of the actual size of the place. As previously mentioned, each commodity not

only reveals the ethno-religious identity of the seller but the origin of the produce as well. By considering the commodities present in each area of the map, the identity pattern of the traders as well as the story behind each spatial expansion stage of the market can be observed. During the data confirmation process, I showed this sketch to several local Muslims who frequently visit the market. They were surprised that a sketch could be produced of such a large, crowded, and unorganized area. This sketch will be a souvenir for the people in Ambon once the Mardika market is torn down, as is planned for March 2020.

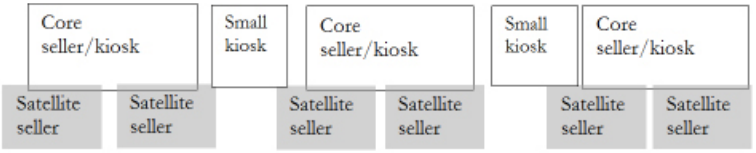
7.4.1 Commodities at the Mardika market and their distribution. The Mardika market offers a variety of commodities, from fresh vegetables to manufactured goods. It is also a place where people buy clothes, shoes, stationaries, or even get their hair cut. A complete list of the types of commodities and the number of traders providing them can be found in the appendices. This section is focused on the main commodities offered by the respondents who were intensively observed during the fieldwork. Most of these commodities fall into the category of food, clothes, and home appliances with their own variations.

Most of the sellers at Pasar Mardika do not use a pricing scale to sell their goods. This especially applies to goods coming from the regional and local trading networks, Seram Island, and internal Ambon Island and its surrounding islands because they are bought in bulk within sacks or buckets. For example, with traditional scaling, the price of bananas is provided per bunch/per tree. Plates are used to determine the price (a plate of chili, a plate of lemon, a small plate of fish, a big plate of fish, etc.). Vegetables are usually sold in bunches. Other types of goods, especially manufactured goods, are sold by following modern, general rules and can be priced by piece or by package.

During an interview, a Muslim banana trader, originally from North Maluku, said that he used to personally buy bananas from Seram when he started his business. Once he got to know more people in the field, he decided to order the bananas from a Bugis middleman; it was as profitable as buying them himself. I became acquainted with him when two of my respondents invited me to observe the unloading process of bananas from a big truck at the market. He approached us and asked us what we were doing there, realizing that we were strangers watching the unloading process. As my fieldwork at the market had just begun, I was surprised that he had noticed us among a crowd of people. It was later revealed that the people at the market observe a lot. For them, the crowd has a pattern. They can easily distinguish between the regular and first-time buyers. I explore this further in the next section, which focuses on the market as an exclusive entity.

7.4.2 Kiosk patterns.

Figure 11 Kiosk pattern at the Mardika market



The Indonesian motto related to healthy eating is *empat sehat lima sempurna* (four is healthy, five is perfect), which implies that a balanced meal should include at least four elements: carbohydrates; vegetables; proteins (*lauk pauk*) from fish, meat, fermented soybean cake (tempeh), or tofu; and fruits. The fifth and last element that would make the combination perfect is milk. Taking this into consideration, it can be observed that most of the kiosks, especially those located outside the market building and along the main street,

are arranged in a manner that they try to meet the above motto, consciously or not. Most of the sellers at the permanent kiosk sell staple food items; tubers (mostly potato), and vegetables (carrot, celery, cabbage, tomato, and chili). These core sellers vary in terms of their ethnic backgrounds, but most of them are Butonese or Bugis. Only a few of these core sellers are native Ambonese, and an even fewer number among them are Christian.

Most of the small-kiosk sellers provide protein-rich foods such as tofu and tempeh, and others sell full and grated coconuts. Interestingly, most of the small kiosk sellers are migrants from Java Island. One of them told me that she was from East Java and that a neighbor had introduced her to the opportunity to sell tempeh and tofu in Ambon. Further, the producers of this soy-based food are mostly Javanese and from the same area in Eastern Java; it is considered as the "staple" source of protein for most of the Javanese people. Having grown up in Java, lived in five different provinces, and visited 17 of the 34 Indonesian provinces over the past 10 years, I can state that it makes sense because tempeh and tofu are largely consumed and produced on Java Island compared to any other area of Indonesia. Further, the seller mentioned that most of the Javanese people earned their spots at the market and were trusted to re-sell the tofu and tempeh from the producers due to the networks they had built.

The last unit is the satellite seller. There are two types of the satellite sellers. The first are those who do not own a space at the market except for a semi-mobile spot on the street. The second are those who have a fixed kiosk inside the market but speed up the selling process by placing the goods right in front of the customers. The satellite sellers have various ethno-religious backgrounds, and the types of commodities offered by them also vary. As their spaces are not completely legal, these sellers are always prone to be yelled

at by the municipality police if they sit/stand too far out on the street risking their goods to be confiscated.

Retributions. At the market, the status of a trader's stall impacts the amount and type of retribution they would have to pay. The temporary and mobile traders are expected to pay the retribution tax four times: to the government, which includes basic garbage collection (municipality); the parking coordinator who gives them the space to stand; the additional garbage collector; and informal security. The total daily retribution amount may range between Rp 6000 and 10.000 (0,37–0,62 euro). It may seem like a small amount, but when it is compared to the net income of a Christian satellite seller who earns a mean of Rp 50.000 a day (3,1 euro), the total retribution is a significant amount.

> In the morning, traders pay the retribution ticket; IDR 2000 is what we paid. Then, for those who cleaned the trash ... some are paid weekly, and if we have a lot of trash, we adjust the amount of the ticket ... during the night they don't use the ticket ... we gave them IDR 6000. (Zaini, Muslim Butonese chili seller, personal communication, December 2017)

Meanwhile, the kiosk holders pay three retribution amounts apart from the annual fee that they have to pay upfront. The three types of retributions are for additional garbage collection, informal security, and the official retribution to the government, which includes basic garbage collection (municipality). The highest daily tax for the latter group is the payment made to the additional garbage collector; a respondent said that the retribution amount depends on the amount of garbage produced through the trading sessions. These sellers earn a gross daily income, including the turnover capital, of Rp 3.000.000–6.000.000 (187,5–375 euro), depending on the size of their kiosks, number of daily customers, and selling period. Their gross income increases around the time

of big Muslim and Christian religious celebrations. Therefore, even if they have to pay Rp 20.000 (1,25 euro) on a daily basis, it would not affect them much.

7.4.3 Internally organized market activities. Two types of internal activities are primarily organized by market actors: *arisan* and cooperative. Cooperative activities are important aspects of the market. At least two of my respondents said that they used to lead saving and loan cooperatives to provide financial capital to the sellers. However, these cooperatives only lasted for a 5-year period in general, and some of them were even shorter. They also faced difficulties in obtaining the money to be returned by the sellers on time. Apart from the cooperative initiative, there are other informal ways of supporting the financial capital of market actors, especially the sellers. This approach is called *arisan* and involves rotating the savings and credit associations in fixed intervals; these are usually decided during social gatherings. First, a number of *arisan* members pool their money or goods of the same value. Then, they draw lots to decide who will get the pooled money/goods for a certain period of time (it can be monthly, weekly, etc.) and continue the process until all the members get a turn.

At the Mardika market, there are many *arisan* groups. Each group has quite a homogeneous ethno-religious background; sometimes they comprise solely of related members due to the trust that exists among them. It is quite common for people to get suspicious of someone who asks them to join an *arisan* if they do not know the person well, due to many fraud practices that have taken place in the *arisan* process. Despite this, many sellers involved in the *arisan* claim that the process is advantageous because it forces them to save a part of their profits to pay their dues and they eventually get the money back. This is related to a general problem of saving money among the sellers. Some of them tend to get trapped in debt

due to their ambitious expansion of trade without a clear budget or forecast estimation.

The marketplace as an exclusive entity. As part of the observational study, I visited the fish market, which seems to be an integral part of the Mardika market but is actually a different institution. Next to the fish market were a line of kiosks selling coconuts. I was with my research assistant, who happened to know one of the coconut sellers and greeted him with a brief introduction of what we were doing. The seller immediately replied, "Yes, you've been around often. I was wondering why." This intrigued me because I did not particularly conduct my participant observation or help sell goods in this area. I occasionally passed by this passage of the market to buy fish, but that was a rare occurrence.

In an interview, a Muslim wholesaler originally from Medan, Taufiq, described the exclusivity of the market and how traders were strongly screened and filtered before they could secure a place at the market. This exclusivity also results in strong ties that bind the market actors together, leaving little room for intrusion from outsiders.

> The community is exclusive ... same people all over again ... there might be new people coming, but the percentage is very low. But eventually, the same people come on a daily basis—the community of traders who sell shallots, garlic, and staples are the same people. So that is why I said it is a bit difficult for new traders [to enter the market]; growth is a bit difficult." (Taufiq, personal communication)

The above excerpt also touches upon the problem of space availability at the market that limits the number of new traders trying to enter the Mardika market. Every inch of the market belongs to a person. However, in contrast to his first statement about the exclusivity of the marketplace, Taufiq also mentioned

that it is quite easy for people to establish their trade at the market: "At the market, [access] is actually free. *Manggurebe* in the Ambonese language. First come, first served." He used the word *Manggurebe,* an infamous local term that is often used to motivate people to work hard to achieve their goals against all the odds. But many people find this saying to be too individualistic and state that people who believe in it only think about their own ambitions. Furthermore, it also implies that people are likely to do anything to achieve their goals even if it means overthrowing their peers. By juxtaposing the word *Manggurebe* with the phrase "first come, first served," Taufiq emphasized on the competitive nature of the market.

7.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the current situation of the Mardika market in the aftermath of the communal conflicts. It began with an outline of the *su aman* period as the part of the conflict cycle that is marked by the low intensity of physical violence. To decide which year should be considered as the starting point of the post-conflict period, I made use of the respondents' views on how they perceived the dynamics of the conflicts while also considering the market and trade as the focal references. As the respondents suggest the year 2004 frequently referred to as the start of the *su aman* period or the start of post-conflict period. However, as the conflicts were experienced differently from one community to another, the promixity to the conflict hotspots as well as borderline areas where most interreligious encounters took place also influenced the length of the conflict periods. More exposure towards the hotspots arguably allowed the respondents to have the sense of conduciveness sooner than the communities who received information about conflicts from secondary sources.

In this chapter, various actors at the market were discussed, with an emphasis on the shift of the socio-economic and political statuses within Ambonese society and how they affected the choice of becoming a trader. The internal challenges faced by the market actors and their methods of addressing the issues were also discussed. Each trader at the Mardika market is influenced by push factors when choosing to work in the informal sector as a trader, distributor, credit giver, etc. Despite their various reasons to take up a job at the marketplace, the highlight of their accounts was the shift in the opportunities available to work at the marketplace in relation to the conflict periods. Some of them benefited from the conflicts, but others had to deal with the negative impact of the conflicts, especially due to their religious backgrounds. For example, not having access to Pasar Mardika due to safety issues forced traders to move to temporary markets (pasar kaget) in predominantly Christian areas.

The last section included an explanation of the internal dynamics of the marketplace. The descriptions focused on the spatial perspective of the marketplace and included the exclusivity aspect of the market. It can be concluded that apart from having strong social capital, a person who wants to find a place at the market needs to have a set of physical and mental survival skills. Trading at the market can be labor intensive, and dealing with different types of people each day, especially if the trader has a minority status, comes with its own challenge of maintaining sustainable relationships for the long run. Not only do they have to suppress the socio-cultural discomfort that may arise during the trading session but also ensure that the business is kept going.

Chapter 8

Positioning Ethno-Religious Relations at Marketplaces in the Post-Conflict Ambon Society

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is focused on the locals' coping strategies that enable them to move on from conflicts, both the narratives and the actual act of violence. It provides a collection of snippets about the everyday lives of the Ambonese, especially those experiences related to ethno-religious or interreligious crossings. Why are the crossings important for explaining the advancement of the post-conflict society of Ambon? I have argued in the previous chapter that due to the impact of conflicts, the Ambonese communities were not being able to interact with each other, cross to their out-group's geographical areas, or reestablish the social harmony that was built through friendships, family relations, or other types of interrelations. These restrictions that were in place during the conflicts were expected to unravel once the violence abated.

The chapter begins with an outline of the Ambonese ethno-religious identities in the *su aman* period (the period conducive to peace) followed by a section about how people moved on from the conflicts. In relation to their efforts to do so, the roles of language and materials such as food for facilitating the ethno-religious

relations among the Ambonese are discussed. In addition, findings on the market's internal countervailing mechanism and how it fosters peace at the grassroots level are provided.

8.2 Ethno-Religious Ambonese Identities

In 2015, it was hard to believe that Ambon had once faced deadly communal violence and that, according to various sources, the people still lived in a highly tense situation. In addition, the people were still deeply segregated based on their religious beliefs and found it challenging to navigate their everyday lives. However, the island seemed normal at the time. The people were occupied with their daily routine activities. Children in uniform walked on the pavements, heading to their schools; the streets were full of cars, minibuses, motorcycles, etc.; and the night street-food stalls seemed to accommodate people from various ethno-religious backgrounds as they enjoyed the grilled Moluccan fish. As an observer from outside the area, my first impression was that Ambon had become a peaceful place.

Throughout the duration of the project that I assisted with, I met various Ambonese people— Christian, Muslim, Catholic, Buddhist, and Hindu religious leaders for the most part—for our project focused on enhancing their mediation capacities in a post-conflict setting. The statements made by them tended to revolve around the idea that peace had been attained in Ambon through religious values and teachings with the help of the revival of customary traditions. I also interacted with the local people at the grassroots level, but it was limited to greetings and light daily conversations.

Despite having visited Ambon a couple of times before I started my official fieldwork and being well acquainted with the conflict-related issues, I could not fully grasp the latent layers of the

ethno-religious tug-of-wars within the society. Therefore, during the first months of the fieldwork, I believed that my goal was merely to explore the positive roles of the marketplace in fostering sustainable peace in Ambon. However, it soon became clear that the ethno-religious relationships in Ambon were not black and white and people could not be easily categorized as friend or foe. Further, religious segregation was an overrated term to refer to the situation in Ambon. There were too many organic correspondences, interactions, and contacts among the people in both neutral spaces and interreligious spatial crossings to be measured.

For example, at the Mardika market, a Muslim trader acknowledged the diversity of both the traders and buyers at the market. The demographic segmentation of the market showed that most of the traders were Muslim, and the majority came from Buton island. However, one male Butonese respondent emphasized that they were native Ambon people, too. He said, "banyak orang Buton cuman kan asli sini," i.e., "there are many Butonese but they are originally from here." What he meant was that the majority of the Muslim Butonese traders were born in Ambon, and, thus, they claimed that they belonged to the area. Such a view was quickly undercut by most of the native Ambonese as they always maintained ethnic boundaries between them and the Butonese. According to them, to be a native Ambonese, one must have a set of cultural identities, such as *pela-gandong* relations or a distinguishable inheritance of a family name, locally referred as *fam*.

Alongside such organic attempts to facilitate interreligious interactions, the governments also took the effort to curb the existing segregation. The excerpt given below of an interview with the vice mayor of Ambon explains the shift in the communities' perceptions of their religious counterparts.

> [They] were no longer afraid of the people of Waihaong [Muslim area] and were no longer afraid of the people of Batu Merah ... 'Can I go to Waihaong? What about my safety and security if I go to Batu Merah?' I think that was the burning question that existed among them ... not anymore ... we are now segregated, localized. The fact is we are now localized [divided] by religion, except those two areas: Wayame, which was never touched by the conflicts, and the three Dusun people returned—Wailete, Kamiri, and Latta. (Ambon Vice Mayor, personal communication, January 2018)

The current vice mayor (2017–2022) was also the vice mayor from 2001 to 2006 (during the *(waktu) panas-panas, su aman-aman* and *su aman* period). His views are based on his experiences in handling the conflicts and the efforts taken to build peace and mediate the communications between the adversaries, which were his critical tasks at the time. The above excerpt shows that the government intervened in the IDP's settlement issues during the post-conflict period. There were three options for the IDPs: return to their initial neighborhood, reintegrate into a community of a similar background, or relocate to a completely new area. The successful and official IDP return programs were held in three *dusuns* (smaller unit than a village)—Wailete, Kamiri, and Latta. During the fieldwork, I once participated in an interreligious ceremony in Latta, during which the Muslim and Christian communities gathered and played musical instruments to greet a delegation from Myanmar that had come to the area. Both the groups jointly played a local song; the Muslim groups played *rebana,* a Malay tambourine used in Islamic devotional music, and the Christian groups played the saxophone. These two musical instruments were found to have religious significance for each group.

This joint ceremony aimed to emphasize that these two communities can peacefully live alongside one another and that the resettlement was, at last, possible. Such an interreligious ceremony

became common in the aftermath of the communal violence. Although many respondents were skeptical about its impact to truly bring the communities together, I believe that this performative conduct provided a sense of cooperation and collaboration that was non-existent during the conflict or *panas-panas* period. Many people on the street—those traveling by minibuses, cars, or motorcycles—deliberately took pictures of this joint performance. Despite the debate on whether they can help curb physical segregation, such ceremonies allowed the mental segregation to be recast, reassuring the people that Muslims and Christians were able to now live on good terms with one another.

As mentioned in the interview excerpt, the mixed areas consisted of the Wayame village, which did not get involved in the conflicts, and the original residences of the IDPs. A small part of the mixed area is at the heart of Ambon City—the center of business where Mardika Market and the governmental offices are located. In addition, the areas surrounding Universitas Pattimura, where many boarding houses have been set up for students to stay in, are also considered to be mixed areas. The current situation in Ambon allows people to easily move around and cross borders compared to the *panas-panas* and *su aman-aman* periods. However, people still associate one's address with religious identity.

> I asked them, and they said it has been decades or even centuries … the emotional bond between the Christians and those who were in the camps at that time … they considered the Muslims as their family. "What if I resettled them back here?" I asked. They stopped talking ... It was then agreed that we would do *kerja bakti* [voluntary work such as cleaning the village or road to strengthen the bond among the village members]. We did the voluntary work together because in that *kampung* [village], all the houses had been burned down and were ruined. We cleaned up the two *kampungs,* those two *dusuns* [a unit of community].

> The Muslims came and the Christians also came without any security or guardship. (Vice Mayor of Ambon, personal communication, January 2018)

While the government understood the importance of reviving the market, their direct intervention efforts were limited. However, the government relentlessly tried to persuade both the religious communities to allow the return of people who had to dislocate from their homes. Some agreed, but others were too traumatized by the violence. They were afraid that accepting their counter-religious neighbors would jeopardize their own security. Without an official guarantee of safety granted by the government, returning the IDPs to their initial homes was considered unsafe. Ultimately, only three villages accepted their neighbors back: Wailete, Kemiri, and Latta.

8.3 Moving on from the Conflicts

During the first eight-month fieldwork period, I rented a room in a newly constructed boarding house. It was around 1 km from the Mardika market in a Christian area that shared its borderline with a Muslim village. Four months into my stay there, a motorcycle taxi driver whom I hired to drop me back from the Mardika market, told me, "Wasn't this the first house that was burned down during the riots?" That was the turning point that made me realize the extent to which the fieldwork setting had once been affected by severe communal conflicts.

My ignorance about the details of the conflicts resulted in the local people being hesitant to talk about their past experiences. Unless I conveyed my understanding of the hardships they faced during the conflicts, the respondents would provide normative answers without delving into the past. This occurred with both the Muslim and Christian respondents. For example, my research

assistant, Dirman, knew the boarding house I was staying at as well as the stories related to the small alley in which the house was located. After I told him what the driver had conveyed to me, Dirman said that he had known about the burning and that the area was once a conflict hotspot because of its strategic borderline location but had not told me about it. I later gathered from various respondents that the alley was once used to lay out the dead bodies of the victims before further actions were taken. The stories about the boarding house and alley were varied among the respondents from different religious backgrounds. But to reveal them, the respondents needed my assurance that it was not them who decided to reopen the topic. This indicated that talking about the past still made them uncomfortable.

The common narratives on the reconciliation process revolved around inviting people to stick together despite the provocations that circulated on a daily basis within the market areas. This was an attempt to assure each other that nobody wanted such conflicts to reoccur. "Overall, it seems like people are not afraid anymore" (Noni, personal communication, June 2018). Such a call for unity is further illustrated in the excerpt below:

> The people who sell at Mardika, they said they did not want it [the riots] to happen again ... because they have been selling, the business has started to be good, they have started to earn money ... so they do not want issues to escalate into something like before. (Tante Feby, personal communication, June 2018)

The reasoning behind such a narrative could also simply be rooted in the need for stability and security at the market. Most traders at the Mardika market do realize that the main buyers have always been Christians. Therefore, it is arguably important for them to maintain the positive image of the market so that the Christians—those who are walking in the market, as the traders put it—feel safe

and can fulfill their needs. The Christians are known for buying products in bulk; they often organize religious or ethnic gatherings and serve a large amount of food to their guests. Meanwhile, the Muslim buyers are known for their meagre spending and buying. Moreover, they are also known for bargaining on the price, while the Christian buyers are not perceived as doing so.

Once the intensity of the violence reduced, Tante Feby frequently visited the Mardika market. When the Christian traders' re-integration into the Mardika market began, she said that people clearly supported peace and went against the idea of violence and conflict. She heard people at the market calling for unity and security, especially among the Muslim traders. The Muslim traders tried to convince both the Christian sellers and buyers to be confident in the safety of the market and that they, too, did not want the past riots to happen again. They strongly condemned the act of the outsiders who attempted to incite and, worse, sustain the conflicts in the past. This feeling of mutual victimization facilitated bonds among the market actors. This feeling of "sameness" was manifested in the desire to stick together and counter external interventions and provocations that would jeopardize the (re-) established market communities. A clear statement given by a Muslim seller is presented in the excerpt below.

> When I was doing grocery shopping, there was one person who said, "Come on, let's not repeat it again." People said that they have been suffering to death … someone said that if there are outsiders, get rid of them because people from outside instigated the chaos. (Tante Feby, personal interview, June 2018)

"It is true that most people did not want it to happen again," said Noni, a female Christian Ambonese respondent. Such a unity-based narrative was also confirmed by a Muslim peace worker, Ca Mina (40), who emphasized that the Muslim traders expressed their

desire to live peacefully not only to the traders and buyers at the market but also to their respective families. They stated that the conflicts only made their lives miserable and no good came from them. Further, in the interview, Ca Mina mentioned that the biggest fear among the women living in conflict-prone areas was losing their family members. Not only did these losses have an emotional impact on the women but huge financial implications as well.

Kadir's (2017) respondent conveyed his disappointment of not knowing or feeling satisfied with the end result of the conflict, as no one seemed to win the war. No such argument was present among the various peace narratives expressed by the women interviewed for this dissertation. Peace was not about who gained more or the number of family members they lost during the conflicts. Peace was not about knowing who the winner was; because it did seem not to matter for women. Peace was not about power. Peace was a feeling. Peace was leaving everything behind and starting afresh with a clean slate. For example, Tante Feby lost her two sons during the conflicts, and she was distraught when recollecting how she had to carry on with her life without her sons in the aftermath of the conflict. For her, whether her side won the conflict was irrelevant unless, hypothetically, the result of the conflict could have revived her sons.

Various attempts have been made to reform the interreligious relationships and stop the violence, from the smallest societal unit—family—to the most complex societal structure—marketplace—and the other way around. Finding the link between the family and marketplace helps reestablish the social fabric at the grassroots level that was destroyed during the conflicts. Nevertheless, such a communal perception could easily be revoked by the various individual stances pertaining to the idea of conflict. Each person was entitled to their own opinion and understanding of the situation; it was clear that some people at the market viewed the

Christian traders' return to the Mardika market in a negative light. There were at least two reasons. First, they did not want their income to be affected by the increased trading competition with the Christians. Second, they were still holding a grudge against the Christian community. Tante Feby, a Christian respondent, said, "Yes, each person was on their own. They were holding a grudge ... some were, but others were not". Concurrently, she also believed that there were people who would leave everything behind for the sake of a better future.

8.3.1 Peace Narrative: Katong samua ini korban. The most common narrative that highlighted the stage of compromise in relation to the two communities' experiences is the sentence "katong samua ini korban" or "we are all victims." This narrative potentially emerged from the understanding that the groups mutually suffered during the conflicts or through the interventions by outsiders, especially the peace workers or religious or customary leaders who worked towards helping the communities to reconcile with each another. At the market, people supported one another and chased away the outsiders (of the market) who attempted to provoke the Muslims and Christians.

> They said, "we have been suffering to death" because it was mostly the Christians who bought their goods … Yes, they said it at the market. I have heard once they said, "we were starving and almost died because we did not earn money and did not have food." The Christians bought stuff from those who were selling food. Otherwise, how could they get the money? There were also people who said "people—the Muslims and the Christians in Ambon—had all united together when they talked about the riot; it was the outsiders who made us suffer. They destroyed the inside [of Ambon island]." (Tante Feby, personal communication, June 2018)

In an interview, Tante Feby recalled her experiences with anger. She conveyed the statements made by the Muslim traders a couple of times. She emphasized that the Muslims on the other side were suffering because of the conflict and had called for unity between the Muslims and Christians instead of further separation. It seemed important to her to repeat this sentence, almost as if she was trying to reassure herself that it was indeed the case. Considering that she lost two sons to the conflict, these statements could serve to help her accept that she was not the only victim of the conflict; other people, on the opposing side, had also suffered to the point of death.

In addition, several incidents supported the common understanding that they were all victims. First, the state's failure induced structural violence that inevitably led the Ambonese people to suffer from the conflicts. This assumption is based on narratives on the involvement of military and police in fueling the conflicts and obtaining the highest level of benefits from the prolonging of the conflicts. It is also rooted in the inability of the police officers to prevent various incidents such as the Republik Maluku Selatan Day on 25 April, 2004, which disappointed both the Muslim and Christian communities. The burning of Soya Church in Soya *negeri* in the mountainous area was allegedly done by the Youth Christian gangster (Coker), who was said to be backed up by military power in an attempt to fuel the Christians' provocation and hatred of the Muslims. Coker is known as being a provocateur during the conflicts.

Second, once the Muslim and Christian youth gangsters were reunited through a peacebuilding program, some of their leaders were asked to share their experiences of the conflict. Although the encounters began due to severe distrust among them, they gradually understood that they had been deeply provoked. For example, two child soldiers, Zakaria and Roland, were reunited after almost

killing each other during the conflicts. This story was covered by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (Nurdin, 2018). They had both been victims of the elite's interests. Last, even the vice mayor stated that the Ambonese people had been the victims of a bigger political interest that spread throughout the country during the turmoil period after the fall of Soeharto.

8.3.2 Ethno-religious relations: Positioning Muslim-Christian relations through baku-masuk practices. The term *baku-masuk* has been widely used in both oral conversations and written pieces on the efforts made to revive the social fabric of Ambon. The term means "to get into each other" or "to cross into each other," both in the physical and mental sense. For scholars studying the interreligious relations in Ambon, *baku-masuk* is often used as the focal parameter (Al Qurtuby, 2016; Kadir, 2017). During the fieldwork, the respondents often shared stories related to this topic without necessarily mentioning the term. For example, a Christian female seller from Lilibooi (47) conveyed how her brother decided to get married to a Muslim girl from neighboring village and decided to convert to Islam. For her, this was the biggest betrayal she had ever faced, and she refused to speak to or meet her brother for over 25 years. She further emphasized that this does not mean that she hates Muslims for she had once worked for a Muslim family in Jakarta as a live-in household helper, and they had treated her well for a good nine years. She stated that while corresponding and interacting with Muslim people was acceptable, having a family member convert to Islam was a whole other scenario.

When asked about how the Christians respect Islamic values, the respondents often referred to *menjaga* or *katong saling menjaga*. In the Indonesian language, this word has at least seven meanings: look after and provide for the needs of, tend, protect, defend, watch, keep, guard, etc. Although they might all seem to refer to

the same situation, in the case of Ambon, the word *menjaga* held two meanings. It implies that the people want to protect what they now have—the relatively peaceful situation within the society. On the other hand, the term also suggests being cautious with one another. It implies that people should protect each other to a certain extent but avoid and maintain distance between each other as well. *Menjaga jarak* is a common expression used in the Indonesian language related to "keeping distance." In contrast, the root word "jaga" could have a negative connotation when used in the phrase "baku jaga" (*baku* means "to each other"); instead of defending or protecting each other, the term "baku jaga" indicates that two groups or communities should defend themselves against the other due to the presence of high levels of tension.

I realized the importance of this term when Rose (23), a Christian female respondent, told us about how the drivers of the minibus from her village decided not to transit at the Batu Merah Market minibus terminal (located next to Mardika Market) when they had unresolved on-going problems with their neighboring villages, especially Liang. She referred to the situation as "baku jaga." As far as people can remember, these two villages have been constant enemies and frequently attack each other. Little is known about the trigger of each attack, but it previously began due to a dispute over the island of Pombo located between these two villages. The status of this island is debatable even today.

> Within the market, it never happened. As far as I know, they did indeed protect each other. (Taufiq, personal communication, January 2018)

At the market, the *baku-masuk* is associated with the mixing of traders and sellers from both the communities. As a male Muslim Butonese stated, "*Orang mana saja, pembeli kita nggak tau orang mana,*

orang mana saja" or "Whoever; we don't know the backgrounds of the buyers. They can be whoever." This statement accounts for the importance of diversity at the market as the traders ultimately only focus on selling their commodities, regardless of the buyers' backgrounds. As in the quotation above, the word *berjaga* tends to have a positive meaning when used in the context of interreligious relations at the market. Taufiq used the word *berjaga* in the same sense as the traders at the market who protected each other.

Regarding the general configuration of the buyers and traders at the market, the Christians hold the positions of power at the market because they make up the majority of the buyers. The following is an excerpt from an interview with Tante Feby:

> So, it has been already conducive (su aman) for quite a while. The Christians all go shopping ... they buy bananas with other stuff to be sold ... now, those who dominate [the market] are the Christians who buy stuff in bulk. (Tante Feby, personal interview, June 2018)

This contradicts the Muslims' view of the Mardika market as they claim that the Muslims are the ones who dominate it and have always been in positions of power. This holds true when considering the number of Muslim sellers at the market; a respondent stated that the Muslim traders account for over 90% of the total number of sellers. However, no official report on the exact number of sellers at the Mardika market can back up this claim.

8.3.3 The current situation of ethno-religious arrangements at the market. In the post-conflict period, trust building manifested in both large-scale and small-scale interactions. While Ambonese people still proclaim their society to have high levels of distrust, at the market, trust is not necessarily built; it can be transactional. This practice is dispersed through various forms of interactions, and it

involves different combinations of actors; for example, between distributors and sellers, buyers and sellers, buyers and market helpers (specifically helpers who carry customers' purchases), sellers and market helpers, etc. In the case of a transaction between a distributor and seller, the distributor would provide 20 bags of potatoes that cost around 15 million rupiahs or 1000 euros to the seller without asking for upfront payment; the payment would have to be made only after two weeks. This relates to how debt strengthens and tightens the relationships among market actors, and such an argument has been extensively discussed by Kadir (2017) in his dissertation. Ties formed due to debt in turn help revive the sense of dependency among the community members affected by the conflicts. Apart from this social function of debt, the general market mechanism is contradictory to the common economic practices outside it. This implies that the market allows various socio-cultural and economic rules to be applied within its spatial boundary.

At the market, I observed a number of small interactions that fostered trust without the actors consciously trying to do so. For example, the buyers would leave their goods at a seller's stall and pick them up once they were done shopping as some of the kiosks are located far away from each other. The buyers do so because of the dense crowd at the market makes it hard for them to freely walk around. Further, the physical condition of the market and the presence of watery potholes, piles of garbage, narrow alleys, and irregular trading spaces, force people to fulfil most of their needs in a single area to avoid carrying heavy goods. Therefore, they would leave their bags with a seller—usually one on the street or close to the minibus terminal—and continue shopping. Otherwise, they would hire a helper to follow them around and help carry their groceries.

> For example, when an incident happened ... When they found commodities left behind, they protected them. They [the sellers] would run empty handed, except for maybe some money or something. Later, when the situation got de-escalated, they would come back. (Taufiq, personal communication, January 2018)

Among the traders, trust was also built through the act of mutual assistance. I regularly helped a Muslim seller clean lemongrass in the evening and often found a number of vegetable bundles left at sellers' stalls. Since I frequently visited that area, I knew that those stalls belonged to Christian sellers who lived in the Benteng village. Once, a Muslim seller accepted the money given by a buyer who bought one of the vegetable bundles and said that she would pass it on to the original seller the next day. Since competition is commonplace in the marketplace, these sellers always try to not breach any unwritten market conventions for such an act could lead to them being expelled from the market society, which is the last thing a market actor would want because they know exactly how hard it is to enter the exclusive market community. The act of selling others' goods is a common practice among the market actors, regardless of their ethno-religious backgrounds, and is based only on the proximity of the stalls. As illustrated in the excerpt interview above, such practices were also common during the *panas-panas* and *su aman-aman* periods, during which the situation was still unstable to a degree. The Christian sellers were required to stay alert because sudden attacks could occur, requiring them to leave their goods at their respective trade spots.

> Well, the market was good. It was the traders' initiative to re-establish the market. Some of the traders and buyers who initially had close relationships formed what they call Pasar Baku Bae here [in Ambon]. (Head of the Mardika market unit, personal communication, December 2017)

As given above, the head of the Mardika market pointed out that traders took the initiative to form the Pasar Baku Bae, with the help of projects run by local and international NGOs, which arguably facilitated the initial interactions among the traders near the Mardika market. During the *su aman-aman* and *su aman* periods, one would invite others to sit beside them as a common method of ensuring that everyone felt welcome.

However, proximity does not always guarantee that sellers would get along well. During my observations following a group of female Christian temporary sellers, the permanent sellers continuously asked the temporary sellers to move, to not stand in front of the permanent sellers' areas too long, or to only place their trays at a specific side of the trading area. I, too, had to continuously move around because the permanent sellers stated that their stalls and goods were being blocked, reducing the number of buyers who approached them. The temporary sellers have faced this on a daily basis for years as they have no better choice. In this scenario, a seller's religious and ethnic background plays a great role in acquiring a space at the market. Further, networking and good relationships with people at the market also increase the chance of both temporary and permanent sellers securing their trading spaces in the face of the relocation and renovation plans. The Christian sellers understand their low bargaining power at the market, and so they decide not to act on it. They prefer compromising and helping the main sellers during the busy periods.

8.3.4 Language choice and the problem of othering. In a society that was once and still is divided based on the people's identities, identifying symbolic markers among the community members arguably plays a more important role than before the conflicts occurred. One of the most common symbolic markers is language. In Ambon, deciding which salutation to use to address someone

can be challenging. A failure to be prudent about one's religious identity would result in an awkward or uncomfortable moment at the very least. There are also various salutations that can be used depending on the gender and age of the person being addressed.

> The motorcycle taxis and pedicabs were the first border crossers along with the female traders at the market ... Before the conflict, all of the pedicab drivers were people from South Sulawesi; some of them were from Southeast Nusa. And they had to be Muslim. It was common knowledge that people who peddle the pedicab were Muslim ... The youths in the time of conflict did not have a source of income, so they then became motorcycle taxi drivers and earned money from it ... If we call [a Christian] "*Abang*" [a Muslim salutation for young men], he will correct us and say, "I am not *Abang,* I am *Bung*" [a Christian salutation for young men]. He would not want to be called *Abang* pedicab driver because *Abang* is for a Muslim. (Opa Rino, male Catholic Ambonese, personal communication, June 2018)

The above interview excerpt illustrates the shift in the source of income among the Christian youth through the acquisition of stranded pedicabs in the Christian areas during the conflicts. Apart from the polemic of this one-sided acquisition, an interesting interaction pattern also emerged. These Christian pedicab drivers clearly stated that they did not want to be called *Abang* for it is a Muslim salutation for young men. The Christian youth preferred to be called *Bung* or *Bu.* On the one hand, this is linked to the importance of specifying one's social identity to the Christian groups. On the other hand, security is also an issue because being associated with the Muslim community while in a Christian area could lead to danger.

Language is also apparent as an interreligious symbol at the market. I noticed two different patterns among the Christian and Muslim traders. I observed a Muslim seller who avoided saying

any words that addressed the crowd; for example, she would say "Cucumber, cucumber, Rp 5000, Rp 5000" instead of saying "cucumber *mama* (ma'am)" although she knew that most of the buyers were Christian and *mama* is a common way of addressing Christian women. On another occasion, one of the female Muslim respondents was astonished when I addressed her *mama*; she was highly uncomfortable and stated that *mama* is used to address Christian females and would, thus, not be applicable to her. Furthermore, she asked me why I used that word to ensure that I am not a Christian.

Meanwhile, the Christian sellers tended to address their buyers/potential buyers more: "*Mama*, lamet (traditional snack in Ambon), *Ma*, three for Rp 5000" or "*Oma*, lamet, *Oma*" (Oma is a form of salutation to address female senior citizens). Even women who wore a veil were generally addressed as Mama and not *Aji.* Aji is a common salutation for female Muslim senior citizens, assuming that she has been to Mecca to perform the *hajj*. In one of the trading sessions, a respondent told me that they were all well aware that Muslim people/women would not buy or were reluctant to buy things from them, especially the cooked food or half-cooked vegetables.

8.3.5 Human patterns at the market. During my observational study at the market, I found that unpredictable situations contribute to a physical form of the random walk. The chaos of the market urged buyers to follow random and unpredictable paths while choosing and buying the offered merchandise. Their past purchase paths or experiences at the market did not necessarily inform their current and future choices of sellers at the market, but sometimes they did. They would get off from the minibus at a different point of the market each time they visited and exit the market from different points as well. The order in which they bought their goods

would also differ every time. Further, the weight of the bought supplies would also influence their economic behaviors. If the buyers have favorite sellers at the market and frequently buy goods from them, they would undertake extra efforts to go to those sellers and get better deals. But this usually happened only when the buyers needed to buy products in bulk for special events. I found that this phenomenon cannot be separated from the fostering of random interactions at the market, and it undermines the assumption that people would consider the sellers' ethnic and religious backgrounds when conducting economic transactions at the market.

8.3.6 Cooked dishes as religious boundary. The people at the market, despite their low levels of education and limited understanding of religious teachings, have stronger beliefs and, to some extent, more concerns towards their religious opponents than those who are better aware of the religious teachings. These people would reject the cooked dishes or snacks and even the boiled vegetables offered by Christian sellers at the market. Further, they would also warn others at the market to not buy from these Christian sellers. When asked why it was so problematic for them to buy cooked food from the Christian sellers, they said that they were afraid that the sellers would have a) used the same pan used to boil/cook pork or dog meat, b) allowed dogs to touch the food they cooked (Muslims believe that Christians pet dogs in their houses), c) unconsciously contaminated the food by sweating over it (the Muslims believe that Christian sweat is haram (forbidden) for them).

One of the Muslim sellers recounted that a Christian woman once walked around the market selling traditional cooked snacks. This seller was new to the market, and most people did not know her yet. The Muslim seller bought something from her without knowing her affiliated religion. After the woman moved away, the

Muslim's neighboring seller told her that the new seller might be Christian because "she sounds like a Christian when she speaks; she has got the specific accent." The next day, when the Christian seller offered her snacks to the Muslim seller, the Muslim seller asked her if she was Christian, to which she received an affirmation that the seller was indeed Christian. The Muslim seller apologized and stated that she could no longer buy the Christian seller's goods. The Christian did not visit Mardika Market or, at least, that side of the market again.

However, if it is not about food to be consumed, the Muslim sellers would try to accommodate the Christian buyer's needs to prepare their specific dishes. For example, during big festive events such as Christmas, the Muslim sellers would adjust the number of ginger and galangal units stored as they are aware of the Christians' requirements for cooking pork and dog meat. Despite the Muslims' complete avoidance of pork and dog meat, they support the Christians by providing the items they need, thereby crossing the religious boundary.

8.3.7 Internal market expansion. During an interview with the Office of Trading and Industry of Ambon City, I was informed that Mardika Market would soon be renovated. Although the blueprints of the design have been finalized, the budget is still being discussed. The people at the market were found to have two interesting and opposing views to this plan. Most of the permanent sellers, irrespective of their religious affiliation, believed that it would not change the situation much. They would be able to obtain stalls of the same size for they have legal documents and status as the owner of their respective stalls. In addition, the head of the market has informed them that there would be a special forum for permanent sellers to discuss this issue further. However, some of them were skeptical about this plan and did not even want to

discuss it further for they believe that it would not happen in the near future. There are many aspects to consider, and the place to which the government would relocate the sellers is not clear yet, which undermines the proposed plan.

For the temporary sellers, the relocation issue is a major one. It should be noted that the views of the temporary sellers were divided based on their religious background. These temporary sellers use the extra space of permanent sellers; they usually open up their stalls or set up their trays against the front side of the permanent sellers' spaces. The temporary sellers had to obtain permission from the permanent sellers to use their extra space or rent or "buy" the space; the price varied depending on the stall's location and size and the trader's social capital. Muslim temporary sellers viewed this renovation and relocation plan as a major inconvenience. It closely relates to their social capital, i.e., the networks and relationships they've established with the permanent sellers, and they worry that they would not get a strategic place for their stalls once again. Additionally, ethnically Butonese sellers (Southeast Sulawesi Province) will be required to approach the head of the Butonese traders' organization at the market to gain access to the new place, which might require them to pay an additional fee.

Meanwhile, the temporary Christian sellers supported the renovation and relocation plan. The Christian sellers' group that I interviewed said that they had been waiting for a rearrangement of the market for a long time because it would give them a fairer chance to obtain strategic places to trade. In the current situation, the following aspects are considered for them to be able to sell their goods: a) they need to stay in groups with other Christian sellers (usually from the same area/village); b) they usually take up space on the outer side of the market (there are barely any Christian sellers in the inner circle of the market; only a few occupy these spaces for a specific ethnic reason, which will be discussed in a

later section); c) the selling spots are close to the minibus terminal where the bus going to the Christian village is parked (a form of precaution against any violence that may happen at the market); and d) they need to make extra efforts to get along with the permanent sellers, who are mostly Muslims and migrants, fighting against their trauma and identity as being native Ambonese but excluded from the market society because of their Christian identity.

8.4 Internal Conflict Countervailing Mechanism During the Transformation Period

Do peacebuilding efforts need to be intentionally coordinated to build peace? It should not be surprising that most of the organic peace initiatives at the grassroots level were not necessarily meant to build peace. Such a premise also became the reason why peace workers tend not to incorporate this initiative when designing peacebuilding programs. There are two reasons why the grassroot-level initiatives were often underestimated. First, the intention was not to build peace but to survive and resume their everyday lives. Therefore, it has been difficult to incorporate such types of activities into the peacebuilding efforts. Second, unlike the formal hybrid peacebuilding efforts, the grassroots level initiatives have mostly been uncoordinated and unmeasurable; they took place without any specific goals or outcomes. Nevertheless, the impact of everyday peacebuilding should not be undermined as they did support and determine the success of the formal peacebuilding efforts. I argue that the grassroot-level initiatives formed the foundation for sustainable peace and gave the society a sense of owning the process. It also "prepared the ground" so that the society would be ready for the peacebuilding interventions. A failure to strengthen the foundation of peace would hamper the entire peacebuilding process, resulting in a semi-effective situation without the society having a sense of belonging to the process.

In 2008, when the market building was rebuilt, the government needed several people to manage the parking space, which was divided into several zones. At first, this decision was based on practical reasons related to the size and plan of the market as previously mentioned in the section of market actors. Further, the need for a balanced representation of ethno-religious groups among the parking supervisors became apparent over time. Each zone is overseen by one parking coordinator and several parking rangers, usually from the same village and religion or in *pela-gandong* relations with each other. This job, although it may seem quite common and mundane, has a prestigious outlook for the market actors. With respect to the hierarchical structure, the parking rangers and coordinator are regarded as the *bourgeois* of the market. In addition, they make an arguably high level of income from the parking retribution fees and from sellers offering their commodities around the parking zone. Usually these sellers place their plastic trays on the seats of motorcycles parked in the zone. "There is an interesting thing there, the command system in that particular situation. And it was indeed guarded, so not everyone could get into the arena [of the market]" (Pieter Soegijono, academic at Maluku Indonesia Christian University, personal communication, October 2017).

The above quote is related to the chain of command and how the market actors protect each other by maintaining the exclusivity of the market. The network formed through *pela-gandong* and overdue friendships became their ultimate defense for stabilizing and maintaining order at the market. Internal rivalries at the market, whether between gangster members or over parking zone authority, may result in opportunities for others to expand their networks and turfs by absorbing more members, revealing their legitimate power. During the conflict period, the Ambonese people had mixed relationships with the military guards. They were perceived

as fueling the conflicts and being incapable of settling the conflicts or preventing attacks. Hence, respondents suggested that the police sometimes decided to cooperate with the informal market leaders and maintain order and social stability through them. Due to the exclusivity of the market community, the guardianship of the market informal leaders became its defense against both positive and negative impacts. The positive impacts involved, for example, the controllability of these communities, which allowed the damages caused by instability to be managed as well. Meanwhile, the negative impacts include the fact that the exclusivity factor sometimes favored a network of people with specific social capital and family relationships.

The configuration of the parking coordinators consisted of prominent, fearless people from each native village of Ambon and its neighboring islands who claimed to hold power and were actively involved in the conflicts. Some of them were warlords. To maintain their credibility, they were often involved in fights too. Some of them got arrested by the police for their alleged extortion of money from sellers, but they immediately got released once the sellers came forward to testify in their favor. The respondent who conveyed this story said that the decision to employ these people was taken to securely and peacefully govern the market as well as to ensure stability. Although the parking coordinator has an extended role in informally "securing the stability" of the market, few of the respondents referred to them as gangsters; hence, this label is not used for their extended job profile.

As the data suggest, the current situation at the market is dynamic, fragile, and prone-to conflict, which are the core characteristics of the market. Several types of violence and dispute continuously take place at the market, such as inter-village fighting; internal disputes involving ethnic groups, traders and community-based organizations, market traders, and the municipality police;

and small and temporary disputes among the traders and/or distributors and agents. Of these market disturbances, the data reveals that most of the disputes were resolved through informal mediation by relevant and direct actors at the market or through police interventions if a crime was involved.

The fact that continuous internal ethno-religious conflicts and disputes or even crimes at the market do not interfere or instigate bigger conflicts within the Ambonese society arguably means that the market does contribute to sustaining peace and safety in the post-conflict period. Referring to the East-Indonesian culture mentioned in the Context chapter, the existence of small conflicts and disputes instead of contact avoidance indicate the presence of healthy relationships within the society. This also implies that the society is ready to return to its default *baku-bae* state. The quotation below explains how the market contributes to the reconciliation process in the Ambonese society by providing a space for meetings. The excerpt also highlights the important roles of the elite actors, especially the religious leaders, in backing up and channeling the grassroots initiatives to create an impact on a larger scale.

> The only way that reconciliation could happen was at the meeting points. Meeting points were only possible at the market through transactions. There, people met, exchanged jokes, and bargained. At last, reconciliation was taking place. Yes, we considered that reconciliation was possible, and there was a reconciliation process at the elite level. Our leaders—church leaders and Muslim leaders—reminded their followers through preaches, mass services, and Jumat sermons, at churches and mosques that we live among diversity, which is part of *sunatullah*. But at the grassroots level, the reconciliation process was through a medium, which was the market. (Former head of the Industry and Trade Official Office of Maluku Province, personal communication, January 2018)

With respect to the market structure, actors with varying levels of access to power and different interests, regardless of their positions in the society, formed the market community. There are three main stakeholders within the society: the state, market, and non-state actors. Each stakeholder contributes to the formation of the market community by employing different roles and/or exercising different types of power. Among the non-state actors, a number of peacebuilding efforts that focused on the market were also fostered. Some of the organizations which advocated the "peaceful market" project were Peace Circle for Women and Children and Baku Bae Movement. Their project aimed to increase the confidence level of sellers from both the religious communities and enable them to work together to ensure the stability of the market. However, the attempts made by the NGOs and internal market actors were sometimes opposed by the Muslim paramilitary groups who were threatened by the interreligious interactions taking place at the grassroots level.

> This is my personal experience. I remember when the *mamas* (women) conducted the transactions before the existence of the Baku Bae market, they brought fish to Amans Hotel, and, at that time, there were still these groups—the groups of radical Muslims. The Muslims were not allowed to do transactions with the Christian brotherhood. Anyone who conducted such transactions would be killed. If they were women, they would not be killed, but their commodities would be thrown away. Then there were some mamas whose vegetables were thrown into the water drain; the fish as well." (Ca Mina, personal communication, July 2018)

This led to tension within the Muslim communities at the market, between those who wanted peace and those who rejected peace. This situation explains the contradictory interreligious cooperation during the conflict and transformation periods. Not everyone

supported the conflicts. It was not a black-and-white situation. Therefore, stating that the conflicts in Ambon were between the Muslims and Christians would be a form of generalization. With this market community's dynamic and intertwined network and cultural relations, finding a relatable common interest such as economic exchange could overwrite the tension related to their ethno-religious identities.

8.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of how the inter-dependency of the Muslim and Christian communities at the market cemented their strong relations and supported the basis for everyday forms of peacebuilding especially the interreligious cooperation and accommodation. As this chapter focused on capturing the lives of the people in Ambon once the violence abated, the three main elements of this dissertation—the marketplace, trade, and traders—were moved from the backdrop of the discussion to the main focus. I presented a storyline which fills the lacuna of how the three elements eventually provided a platform to re-initiate and strengthen the social fabric of the Ambonese society. It also paid attention to the stages of reconciliation among the communities by outlining the peace narratives, a survival strategy, and ethno-religious relations in the post-conflict setting. It then depicted the current situation of the ethno-religious arrangements at the marketplaces. Further, the possible relations and challenges faced by the market actors were identified based on their ethno-religious backgrounds. Last, the chapter included an exploration of the ability of a marketplace to foster its internal conflict countervailing mechanism by building the market community's resilience. Marketplace is considered as a complex spatial structure which is prone to internal conflicts among its actors.

This chapter depicted the trading process through which both the communities have come to realize that they have been and always will be dependent on each other. This dependency was then argued to be the foundation that fosters a mutually co-dependent existence. Such a realization allowed the feeling of belonging to re-flourish among them, which further helped them to protect the current non-violent situation and relatively stable condition in Ambon. Thus, they shield the re-established relations from (external) provocation.

Throughout this chapter, we have seen how the market provided a space for fostering peace among the various actors in Ambon, and in the previous chapter we saw how marketplaces helped resolve the conflicts at the grassroots level. However, it is highly debatable that a structure such as a marketplace can sustain peace by relying solely on the organic mechanisms of its agencies. Although the internal market mechanism may help manage disputes, similar critiques of everyday peacebuilding also apply to the roles of the marketplace. Organic interventions are not well instrumentalized. That being said, the nature of marketplace as a competitive space is prone to conflict. As discussed in Chapter 5, the prolonged presence of *pasar kaget* (temporary market) was considered as counter-productive towards peace after the integration of mixed traders to the main market. With the current situation at Mardika market, potentials to conflict at the market are identified in this chapter as follows:

Competition over trading space especially in light of the upcoming Mardika market revitalization will cause some disturbance among market actors especially those who do not get designated space with the new arrangement.

Additional retribution targeted to the traders from unregulated organizations will trigger dissatisfaction and feeling of being used among traders. As it has been a cause for a clash among market actors in the past, it could potentially disrub the stable situation at the market.

Chapter 9

Conclusion and Discussion

9.1 Conclusion

This study was aimed at providing a description of the dynamics of marketplaces, trade, and traders in influencing the everyday peacebuilding in Ambon within a conflict-based framework. The complexity and fluidity of these three elements in economic exchanges (market, trade, and traders) to reshape the conflict-affected society of Ambon were examined. In parallel, the roles of economic exchange were embedded not only in the society's spatial dimension but its time dimension as well, which was divided into four conflict-related periods in this dissertation: 1) prior to the conflicts or the *masi aman, sebelum kerusuhan* period, 2) during the conflicts or (*waktu*) *panas-panas* period, 3) transformation period or *su aman-aman* period, and 4) post-conflict period or *su aman* period.

Based on the descriptions and analyses provided in the empirical chapters, several notable conclusions are presented as follows. This study began with an attempt to define peace in its broadest local sense as well as find where, when, and how peace occurred. This peace lens, as an entry point, is what makes this study differ from the existing pieces of literature on conflict-related topics with Maluku or Ambon as the research setting. Other existing scholarships have paid attention to how and why conflicts broke out or, as the

most recent developed theme, why and how the violence ended. The latter might sound similar to the proposed argument of this research. However, I argue that by focusing on the violence, these existing studies failed to grasp the idea of peace through the local and organic mechanisms of the conflict-affected society.

Most of the existing studies (Braeuchler, 2015; Rohman, 2019; Qurtuby, 2016) are interested in agency and the deliberate efforts taken to end violence and revive the communal relationships affected by the conflicts. These studies are reluctant to include organic everyday activities into consideration as these activities tend to be fragile, disorganized, and challenging to replicate. In contrast, this dissertation has argued that everyday places such as markets and activities such as trade and exchanges could provide a strong foundation for peacebuilding at the grassroots level. Apart from their commercial purposes, the interactions that take place at trade points are defined by subtle socio-cultural elements, which arguably contribute to the peacebuilding efforts in the society. On the contrary, the very same trade points were contested spaces that sparked conflicts and, to some extent, were symbolized as being battlefields.

By viewing the conflict-affected society through a positive lens, this dissertation was able to find "peace" in troubled times. Further, the conflict or *waktu panas-panas* period was deconstructed; most scholars (Adam, 2008b; Qurtuby, 2016; Kadir, 2017; Krause, 2018; van Klinken 2001, 2007) have never questioned whether this period was, indeed, always a conflict-filled period. This study found that peace was subtly achieved throughout the conflict period due to economic exchange interactions, in which is called the transformation the *su aman-aman* period in this dissertation. By disembodying the *su aman-aman* period from conventional narratives on the conflict period, this study has reshaped the common understanding of conflict and pointed out that the society was

not constantly under conflict. In doing so, language was shown to be an essential element in the community, having three functions: for performative purposes; to determine the shift in the conflict periods; and as a medium to spread peace messages.

To conclude this study, I provide the dynamics of the market, trade, and traders during each conflict-related period: the *masi aman, sebelum kerusuhan*, (*waktu) panas-panas*, *su aman-aman*, and *su aman* periods. I aim to highlight that, first, depending on the conflict period, each element played a different role but also, they influenced one another. Second, several enabling factors were imperative to allow everyday peacebuilding through economic exchanges to take place, as elaborated on below.

The period before the conflicts broke out was marked by an uneasy relationship among the ethnoreligious groups on Ambon island; a gap between the Muslim and Christian communities due to a fixed labor division was arguably one of the sources of the latent tension. Marketplaces in that period were dominated by Muslim traders, both migrant and native Ambonese. As a complementary element in the social configuration, the majority of the buyers were Christians as they had formal and stable jobs that provided them with fixed monthly income. The Muslim traders were not necessarily less fortunate due to having informal jobs, and the income discrepancy among the Christians was also high. This subtle yet distinct labor division was present since the Dutch administration, during which time privilege was given to those who agreed to convert to Christianity. Besides, Islam in the Moluccas was spread out through trading activities by traders from Arab nations and other parts of (now-called) Indonesia. It is important to note that this interreligious dependency—i.e., the Muslims needed Christians to buy their goods and the Christians needed the Muslims to fulfil their daily shopping needs—established pragmatic relationships between the Muslims and Christians. The situation in which both

the communities were still free to meet with each other and interact in common places such as marketplaces has been termed the period of *masi aman, sebelum kerusuhan* (still safe, before riots).

When the conflict broke out on Ambon island on January 19, 1999, people were found to have mixed reactions. On the one hand, it was arguably quite common for the inhabitants of a place to be involved in a fight. On the other hand, they were surprised that the violence quickly escalated, with each group wearing clothing attributes and religious symbols that implied that they were prepared for a communal battle. The intensity of the violence varied each year; most scholars argue that the period in which the intensity was high, characterized by the lack of big riots throughout the year, signified the post-conflict society. The problem with this perspective is that the scholars tend to neglect the peacebuilding efforts, both organic and deliberate, conducted throughout the conflict period. They argue that if the violence had kept re-occurring and the intensity of violence had not reduced within a specific period of time, then the society was still in on-going phase of conflict.

To provide a different outlook towards the situation during the conflicts, this study has shown that the conflicts did not involve the entire Ambon community as direct perpetrators. However, most of the people living on Ambon Island were direct victims of the conflicts. The idea of sustaining the conflicts was not equally accepted among the people living on Ambon island as they gradually understood that it gave them no benefits and, rather, made them suffer. This emic understanding, supported by wishful acts, drove people to find ways to reconcile with their opponent groups. Various actors, including the government, customary leaders, religious leaders, and traders, mediated these interactions. During the conflict period, the situation in Ambon was full of distrust and tension—most of the local people either refer to this period as *waktu kerusuhan* (during the riots) or *waktu panas-panas*

(during the tension). This period was marked by the separation of markets based on religious identity. It was during this period that the Christian youth began to find opportunities through informal jobs. The women typically became sellers, and the men became pedicab or motorcycle drivers. During the (*waktu) panas-panas,* Muslim traders and Christian resellers were unable to meet, and the distribution of goods was only possible with the help of security guardians. It was not an *aman* (safe) period according to the Ambonese.

In the same conflict period marked by the intensity of violence, an overlaping period served as the background time setting of the violence, in this dissertation is called the *su aman-aman* (kind of safe) period. It was a period that fell between the points of violence, continuously moving and ever changing. It had no exact starting or ending point, and it was distinguished neither by a sum of years nor by an absence of violence. Rather, it was marked by two noticeable signs: the sounds related to the conflicts and the use of the expression *su aman-aman*, which was essential especially among the female inhabitants who made household decisions related to staple food fulfilment. But if we refer to the conventional conflict periodization in Ambon, the conflicts period lasted from 1999 to 2002 (with Malino II Peace Agreement) or 1999 to 2004 (with the last riots against the South Maluku Republic independence movement). The closest way to associate the end of the *su aman-aman* period is by referring it to the (re-)integration of the interreligious traders to the main market in the year 2004. The same year then became the start of the period *su aman* (already safe) which will be elaborated below.

As mentioned earlier, the idea of sustaining the conflicts was not equally supported by all the people of Ambon island. Many people perceived themselves as the victims of the conflicts, and some blamed the elites for the advantages they obtained during

this time. Therefore, those who were not directly involved in the violence tended to consider the sound of conflict as a characteristic marker of its intensity.

The sound was manifested in different forms: the toll of church bells, the sound of steel power poles being knocked at with stone or metal, the explosion of a bomb explosion, the reactions of people, etc. Due to the limited reachability of the sounds, each individual's understanding of the conflicts differed depending on how close they were to the sources of the sounds. This later influenced each individual's perception of their conflict experience as well as their definition of the conflict period. People who lived along the borderlines or in conflict hotspots had a different understanding of the conflicts compared to those who lived in the rather homogeneous areas and were less exposed to direct conflict. For example, a female Christian who lives in the mountainous area of Ambon, Mangga Dua, said that, for her, the *su aman* (post-conflict) period started around 2006. Her perception of the conflicts was influenced by the filtering of conflict narratives by different agencies, causing an inevitable decay and inaccuracy of the information, and further affected by the delay in the transmission of information from the hotspot areas. On the other hand, people who had frequent contact with the world beyond their own religious communities, such as traders at the market who depended on the areas close to conflict hotspots for their livelihood, had the chance to witness the situation and judge the degree of safeness based on their firsthand observations. For them, the conflict period was until around the year 2004 that they subsequently started referring the situation by the term *su aman* (already safe), perceived shorter than the ones who live in the mountain.

The absence of the sound of conflict was crucial to the people as it signified the absence of the violence at a particular moment. They calculated the risks of accessing the areas of the opposite

religion by examining the costs and benefits related to doing so. The Christians' primary reason for accessing the Muslim areas was to obtain a wider variety of food produces at cheaper prices because the prices at the temporary markets within the Christian areas were significantly higher than those at the markets in the Muslim-dominated areas or borderline trade points. Meanwhile, as most of the Muslims relied upon trading, fishery, and other informal jobs for income generation, the separation from Christian buyers due to the conflicts negatively affected their income. Therefore, when the situation permitted, groups of Muslim traders would move closer to the borderline areas in an attempt to reach out to the Christian buyers or re-sellers. Most of these cross-border traders were females. They took up the role of being the breadwinner of their respective families when their husbands lost their jobs or were unable to freely move around as men were more prone to be seen as active perpetrators of conflict and get attacked. In contrast, female traders had the benefit of being seen as less threatening. In various interviews, the respondents stated that, especially in Islamic teaching, it is forbidden to hurt women during a war.

Even such simple interactions were dangerous transactions as each group faced the risk of being accused as a spy by their community and, consequently, were threatened to be killed. Meanwhile, at the borderline trade points, the traders faced the risk of potentially being caught up in a sudden riot, which could result in them being killed as well. On the other hand, at the marketplace, the threat came from paramilitary Muslim groups who forbade the Muslim traders from conducting transactions with the Christians as it was considered as a betrayal of the Muslim brotherhood, which, at the time, was fighting against the Christians to death. The comparatively minor consequence faced by the female traders at the market was their goods being confiscated and discarded.

Another significant pre-condition required for such transactions was the social capital existing in the form of networks between the traders and buyers and, most importantly, the possession of strong intervillage and interreligious kinship networks, locally referred to as *pela-gandong*. This local pact of *pela-gandong* prohibited members from hurting each other and stated that they had to help each other when in need. Both these strategies were applicable for the Muslim and Christian native Ambonese. Meanwhile, as the migrant sellers did not belong to any intervillage *pela-gandong* pact, they had to make use of the networks they had built before the riots took place and rely on their family members to (re)take up trade and farming as their income sources during the conflicts. Either way, each group made use of social networks to survive and disentangle themselves from the conflict-driven situation.

The period in which people worked hand in hand to navigate the conflict period showcased the lack of *(waktu) panas-panas* (time of tensions). The fact that they were able to meet with their counterparts despite the continuous threats faced by them provided a sense of what peace looked like before the conflicts broke out. This sense of "kind of peace" is associated to how the Ambon people called this period the *su aman-aman* (already kind of safe) period. It was not a perfect situation, but it was what they thought they wanted. To underline the importance of the words spoken and associate them with the real on-ground situation, the phrase *su aman-aman* was used to describe the moment at which (local) peace began taking place. This phrase signified a time when people could be more flexible in their ways of navigating the city to fulfill their needs; *su aman-aman* guaranteed that encounters would be "kind of safe." As conveyed by an informant during the final stage of data confirmation, his mom used this exact phrase when she allowed him to go to the Batu Merah market on his own, which she would not have allowed otherwise.

The last period is the *su aman* period. In this study, this period refers to the contemporary situation on Ambon. It began with the re-integration of Christian traders in the mixed market of Mardika in 2004. This re-integration became an important symbol of *aman* or a safe situation as the two opposing and conflicting Muslim and Christian communities symbolically reunited through a common goal of economic exchanges to fulfil each other's needs. This situation is maintained by a mutual understanding and an informal agreement with regard to sensitive issues, especially those concerning the people's ethnic and religious identities. The market actors prevent the reoccurrence of large-scale violence by banning any provocative attempts, including narratives that potentially undermine the order and safety at the market. They also prefer to avoid, if possible, any open discussions at the market about the issue at stake.

In conclusion, studies related to the market have generously contributed to the understanding of various aspects of the society. Understanding the marketplace provides various angles for understanding the dynamics of the society as a whole. It allows theories and concepts in the disciplines of social science, humanities, and economics to flourish and links them to other disciplines. Therefore, connecting the existing studies on the market using a peacebuilding framework, as attempted for this study, was challenging but was proved feasible. Further longitudinal studies are required to unpack and recompose the interplay between the market, trade, traders, and society within the framework of peacebuilding and reconciliation.

9.2 Discussion

In the previous section, I presented the emic explanation of the phrase "peace started at the market" using the findings on the periodization of the conflicts in relation to trade and accessibility of the markets and trade points to answer the research question. Meanwhile, this section serves to link the research findings to the existing concepts elaborated in Chapter 2, wherein I proposed the conceptual argument of this dissertation and stated that "trade is *still* the magic that keeps all at peace." This discussion combines the four main concepts of this research, namely, trade, traders, markets, and peacebuilding, with the collected data depicted in the Findings chapter. I begin by analyzing the idea of peace at the market based on the people's livelihood, attempting to understand how small-scale trade, as a source of income during the conflicts, eventually fomented everyday peacebuilding in Ambon. This is followed by an analysis of how language and daily expressions are important for understanding the notion of peace from below, it further tries to conceptualize the more abstract concepts of space and time in the peace continuum. Last, the importance of the shift towards ethnographic research for studying peace in conflict-affected societies is discussed.

9.2.1 Peace is possible at the market. Richmond (2009) defined peace as "something organic: resting on hybridity, the everyday, agency and self-determination" (p. 328). This definition critiques the concept of "liberal peace" that promotes democracy and free markets as an effective approach to peacebuilding (Richmond & Franks, 2007). When the Ambon conflicts came to an end, scholars argued that the formal peace agreement did not, in itself, secure peace; rather, it was everyday peacebuilding—the bottom-up approach to peacebuilding, including discrete and informal small-trade activities between the conflicting communities—that

enhanced positive actions to enable conflict reconciliation (Adam, 2008; Al Qurtuby, 2012; Braeuchler, 2015). At the same time, peacebuilding efforts were extensively promoted by a number of institutions and organizations through various inclusive initiatives, but the outcomes could not shed light on measures that would be effective in restoring the peace and bridging the gap between the two communities (Al Qurtuby, 2012). However, a local Ambonese scholar Ernas (2012) argued that the official peace agreement, Malino II, did bring about stability and prepared the ground for further peacebuilding measures (both top-down and bottom-up approaches).

As previously mentioned, the answer to the research question has not been suspended until the end of this dissertation; rather, the study began with the established local understanding that "peace started at the market." Building on the idea of everyday peacebuilding through trade at the marketplace, this dissertation has been aimed at uncovering the various links between peacebuilding and the dynamics of the three elements of economic exchange. The findings show that, on the one hand, the marketplace functions as the setting for economic income generation among traders and other market actors as well as a place that fulfils the daily needs of the buyers. On the other hand, it serves as a meeting point for people of various backgrounds, and, consciously or not, such social interactions improved the relationships between the segregated communities post the conflicts. In addition, the marketplace arguably played a role as the information ground during the conflict period.

Evers (1988) defined trading networks as "social processes of exchange ... where interaction takes place for the primary purpose of exchanging goods over more or less greater geographical distances" (p. 92). Evers' definition is related to the purpose of trade being the exchange of goods. However, Ellen (2003) argued that if we

refer to Mauss and Malinowski perspectives, "mundane exchange of material things may underwrite, disguise, or embellish complex forms of social integration; that is "not absolutely necessary" for local productive forces but may be socially necessary to maintain group networks" (p. 52).

The trading process requires trust and a feeling of safety when encountering and interacting with out-group members. This is in line with Evers and Payadarayan's (2006) argument, which states that the cultural equivalent to embeddedness and networking is trust. This way, the expansion of trade is built on the expansion of trust-based relations. Furthermore, they argued that a common ethnicity or kinship may be essential for developing trust and solidarity among traders but not necessarily the only precondition to do so. Essentially, precarious types of business, such as money lending, require the support of religious authorities to sustain their credibility and trust (Evers & Pavadarayan, 2006). The exclusiveness of religion-based temporary markets due to profit-oriented motives, for example in the Christian dominated-areas, in the *su aman* period hindered the mixed interactions of the Muslim and Christian communities. Therefore, I have argued that maintaining the existence of the physical form of the *pasar kaget* when violence has significantly decreased could have hindered the interreligious interactions that were once fostered.

As previously argued in this dissertation, a trade point during the conflict period was a frequented place chosen by traders and sellers through narratives of peace; the words *su aman-aman* and *masi panas-panas* were used as codes to access the trading space. This relates to Lefebvre's (1991) initial argument that "(social) space is a (social) product." This dissertation reveals that the process for an area to become a borderline was through social mechanism preconditioned by the economic needs for access to fresh and cheap produces as well as pre-established social capital among

the actors. Thus, the borderline trade points not only did serve as an economic-oriented space but as they were a social space, they also carried social function to reconcile segregated communities. Similar patterns were also found in the emergence of trade points near temporary speedboat ports; the sellers occupied the space surrounding the port and reshaped the space according to their needs, such as the Benteng market.

From a spatial standpoint, the marketplace serves as a universal *baileu,* a traditional house of the Moluccan province that functions as a village meeting place, which welcomes a variety of people with the same goals. As stated by Cooley (1962, p. 9), "The *baileu* signifies in Ambonese communities [...] as in a number of other societies of the archipelago, where 'house', 'temple', and 'meeting-place' may all blend into one" (as cited in Waterson, p. 66). In her research, Soselisa (2000) describes the residents of Buano Island on the north of Ambon built a *baileu* as "a village house where village and life-cycle rituals took place and where all village problems were discussed and solved" (p. 70). The market, as a *baileu,* eliminated the dichotomy of migrants and native Ambonese and provided a common foundation for all the market actors, regardless of their backgrounds, and accommodated their various needs as discussed by Soselisa (2000) in the context of Muslim and Christian villages on Buano Island. In addition, with stronger social capital in the form of networks among the market actors as well as the revival of the *pela-gandong* pacts in the aftermath of the conflicts, the market became a parameter to judge the broader situation in the Ambonese society and, as stated by Cooley (1962, p. 10–12), "the health of the community was regarded as dependent upon the 'health' of the *baileu*" (as cited in Waterson, p. 67).

Watson (2008) wrote about the neglected role of the market as a public space that contains and allows social connections and interactions among its actors, i.e., the magic of marketplace.

Despite the strong support of the idea that trade helps cement peace between two conflicting communities, Schiel argued that "[…] trade can also have disruptive effects because of the lure of profits at the expense of others […]" (1994, p. 21). In the context of Ambon, Braeuchler (2015) shed some light on the narrative of the limitations of mediating conflict through trade by providing the example of a market established in Nania village, a mixed village that got destroyed during the conflicts, which was initiated through the Baku Bae peacebuilding movement and meant as a neutral space for economic exchanges. This market was located at a crossroad between the Muslim Leihitu area and Christian Baguala district, but it was abandoned by the traders and buyers soon after its opening. Despite its strategic geographical location, this "neutral, violence-free zone" could not fulfill the initial goal of seeding peace through trade. Another economic zone that was set up in Pohon Pule, also located along the borderline between the Muslim and Christian areas, yet it failed to sustain interactions through trade among the community as planned. Here, it is important to consider Schiel's argument on the general idea of economic exchanges, "but even when economic aspects are predominant in exchange transactions, this does not mean that the agents of these transactions are freed from non-economic constraints" (1994, p.16). The case of the failure of the modernization of borderline trades to foster community's economic activities reflected Schiel's argument on the non-economic constraints.

In the context of Ambon, modernizing the physical form of the trade point by establishing a solid building jeopardized the social interactions that naturally took place in the trading space. Traders found the chaos comforting and had already adapted to the temporality of the trade points. By outlining this issue, I would like to emphasize on the shift of *the place* where the organic exchange took place and its impact on *space*. It affected the functioning of the

market in the conflict-affected society. If we examine the concepts of space and place as given by de Certeau (1984), once a natural trade point was transformed into a more formal or modern market, it lost the spatial stories embedded in it. Such spatial stories once helped the traders navigate the marketplace and establish spaces for trade.

In relation to why peace-related economic interventions failed to foster the peacebuilding roles of the marketplaces or trade points, attempts to change the physical form of such social products risked disturbing the internal market mechanism. The new buildings took away the sense of familiarity and comfort as well as the spatial stories related to the marketplace. Thus, artificial trading centers failed to induce economic transactions as a social phenomenon that strengthens the solidarity and mediates as well as mitigates tensions among the actors (Mauss in Schiel, 1994). Set against this backdrop, the market seems to be a delicate and fluid arena for economic exchanges, and its roles could contradict each other over time due to various factors; thus, the market is dependent on the periodical and situational contexts of the society.

Nigel (2009) argued that a person's livelihood involves strategies and practices to fulfill their everyday needs and make a living and emphasized that it provides a coping mechanism to recover from stresses and shocks, both in the current situation and the future. While most studies on livelihoods are focused on the strategies and practices involved, this dissertation has successfully initiated a conversation about livelihood, market, and language. The autopoietic system at the market (Jessop, 2001)—the market "self-constituting in so far as it defines and defends its own boundary *vis-à-vis* its self-defined external environment"—triggered the market communities to share their own codes and program to form community boundaries. The autopoietic system of the Mardika market is described as an internal conflict-countervailing

mechanism that included the use of specific codes and expressions such as *su aman-aman* (kind of conducive to peace)*, su aman* (already conducive to peace), (*waktu) panas-panas* (kind of tense).

Grassroots peacebuilding measures and the authorities' ineffective handling of the conflicts in Ambon and Maluku are often discussed in relation to one another. With this premise, Braeuchler (2015) argued that the absence of such support from the authorities indeed fostered people to "restrengthen, revive, and reconstruct culture and tradition that goes beyond religion and is meant to become the common ground for sustainable peace" (p. 180). In the data-confirmation phase of this study, an Ambonese elite insisted that the expressions *su aman* and *su aman-aman* were both variations of the same phrase, without differentiating meanings. Whereas the people at the grassroots level navigated their ways to fulfill the everyday needs through the expression of *su aman-aman* by opposing it with *(waktu) panas-panas*. It did sound strange for the people to say *su aman* when for them it was not yet *aman*, which in their understanding was marked by the coming of Christian sellers and buyers to the main mixed market, the Mardika market.

Therefore, I have argued that economic transactions and the grassroots-level organic violence-monitoring mechanism, which involved the use of specific terms acceptable for both the conflicting communities, indicate that the government did not truly understand the concept of peace and how to achieve it. However, the autopoietic mechanism of the market would not have found its niche if it hadn't been established to consciously re-strengthen the pre-conflict social capital as well as revive the local wisdom, such as *pela gandong*, to form the foundation of the society.

9.2.2 Language and the notion of peace, understanding of peace from below. I refer to van Minde's statement (1997) that "research on language was founded by understanding of trade and trade network in the region, it shows that language and trade has long been intertwined and inseparable in the society" (p. 4) as the basis of this section. To complement our understanding of the peacebuilding process through trade and marketplaces in Ambon, it is important to analyze the languages and expressions used by the people on a daily basis. In this section, I analyze the use of codes in the local language that enabled the people to access the market and trade points. The use of *su* as a phasal polarity expression to contrast as well as sequentially relate two words is discussed, followed by the use of duplicated words in the expressions (*su) aman-aman* and (*waktu*) *panas-panas.*

The findings have strongly suggested that ordinary, everyday expressions, such as *su aman-aman* and *su aman*, were used as codes to enable trade; this section analyses such patterns through linguistic perspectives. Referring to van Minde's work (1997; van Minde & Tjia, 2002), *su* is used as a marker of the phasal aspect. The word *su,* along with *bal'ong* (not yet), *masi* (still), and *seng lai* (no longer), falls into the category of phasal polarity expressions. Phasal polarity expressions include words contrasted with their polar opposite in a particular situation to show a continuative and sequential relation. Furthermore, *su* denotes the sequence of events and is used in sentences that relate to the future situation. As previously discussed, many of the peace narratives in Ambon were also performative speeches; i.e., references to the actual situation were sometimes intertwined with expectations for the future.

The two parallel periods of (*waktu*) *panas-panas* (kind of tense) and *su aman-aman* (already conducive or kind of conducive to peace) reflect how the Ambonese navigated their lives between the periods of violence. The two periods did not take place one after

the other, but, instead, they complemented each other within the same continuum. The word *su* is a shortened version of *suda* with the origin from Sanskrit language. Both the words, *su* and *suda,* are commonly used in everyday conversations in the Ambonese Malay language. However, the meaning of *suda* contrasts with the meaning of *su* in several contexts, for example *suda* indicates completion, whereas *su* signifies the continuous occurrence of sequential events (van Minde, 1997).

The second part of this analysis is focused on the duplication of words in the expressions *su aman-aman* and (*waktu*) *panas-panas.* Duplication of the word *aman* and *panas* indicates that they are static intransitive verbs, with the degree of the adverbs *aman* and *panas* pointing out "a process or state is maintained for a longer period of time or occurs repeatedly" (van Minde, 1997, p. 119). In the meantime, such a duplication also results in reducing the impact of the meaning. The word *aman* means safe or conducive, and the word *panas* means tense (in this context), whereas *aman-aman* means "kind of" conducive and *panas-panas* means "kind of" tense.

As previously described, the *su aman-aman* period was considered to be the transformation period in the Ambonese society. It was during this period that sporadic exchange activities took place, and I have argued that the interactions during this time served to rebuild trust and revive the social capital and familial ties negatively affected by the conflicts. Here, "transformation" refers to a condition in which change can potentially happen. "Essentially, these phasal polarity items are markers of change—a change that either has actually occurred (as in 'already' and 'no longer' expressions) or is expected to occur or hoped for ('still' and 'not yet' expressions)" (van Minde & Tjia, 2002, p. 290). The use of the words *su* (already) and *masi* (still) signified the occurrence of societal change during the *su aman-aman* and *(waktu) panas-panas* periods as the foundation of transformation period.

9.2.3 The ethnographic approach for studying peace. To begin with, let us recall the analogy of fish trying to define water in relation to the methodologies used by local researchers to conduct research on peacebuilding processes in relatively familiar settings. I have previously discussed the practical implications for applying ethnographic strategies in risk-prone areas and outlined the positionality and degree of potential biases involved in endo-ethnography. This subsection challenges the methodological approaches currently applied in peacebuilding studies.

Having been born and raised in the improbable nation[7] of Indonesia has helped me understand the contradictive nature of its people. The country attracts researchers from various disciplines around the world (Alfred Russel Wallace, Clifford Geertz, Fredrik Barth, Benedict Anderson, Roy Ellen, Anna Tsing, to name a few) and has enabled various key concepts to be proposed in the social sciences. But none of the local scholars have been able to climb the same ladder, let alone reach the same level of prominence. Therefore, with this dissertation and especially this section, I invite my readers to understand the Indonesian society through an Indonesian researcher's perspective and views.

The peace measures proposed in the field of international relations (IR) are heavily influenced by scholars who "perceive problems to be solved with sophisticated material, rational-legal and normative policy instruments, including the need to refine that world via state or global governmentality" (Richmond, 2018, p. 221). Just because an approach is sophisticated does not mean that it is always useful. Richmond (2018) argued that peace studies could establish a common ground between international relations (IR) and anthropology to negotiate the crisis faced by these disciplines. Furthermore, in her book about the cultural dimensions of

[7] The term "improbable nation" was used by Elizabeth Pisani in her book titled *Indonesia Etc.*, which was first published in 2014.

peacebuilding in Maluku, Braeuchler (2015) proposed strengthening the concept of anthropology of peace. She stated that the role of anthropology of peace is to "promote an open and reflected notion and understanding of the local, tradition, and culture, and to raise awareness of their historicity, ambiguity, contestedness, flexibility, and their embeddedness in relational webs that go far beyond the specific conflict" (p. 182). Both the above scholars specified that the existing literature on peace studies lack the fundamental approaches required to address the subjects' needs and identities. The mainstream IR theory focuses on "either state power structures or international norms and rarely engaging with the positionality of their subjects" (Richmond, 2018, p. 222), making the international peace architecture inefficient at the grassroots level. Peacebuilding is required not only to reconcile real-life conflicts but, apparently, also among the various disciplines of knowledge.

Vogel (2016) explored the failure of international attempts to foster peace due to lack of "cultural insensitivity, a disregard of traditions, norms, customs and a general blindness to the local context" (p. 472). Considering this debate from my perspective as an insider, which is supported by my professional experience with conducting a peace-related project in Ambon, I agree that it is important to re-evaluate peacebuilding approaches and ensure they address the subjects' needs. However, applying anthropological theories to peacebuilding efforts could also "reflect on its engagements with colonialism" (p. 223). A similar concern was also expressed by Gerke and Evers (2018), who pointed out that the existing globalized knowledge on Southeast Asian social-science studies has been produced by scholars outside of the individual countries, with locally produced knowledge accounting only for a small percentage of the total body of work. In other words, global scholars' understanding of Southeast Asian countries is based on the perspective of outsiders and not the locals.

Throughout this dissertation, I have presented the advantages as well as disadvantages of being a researcher of a nationality that's related to the communities under study. However, I am aware that I cannot be considered as a complete insider in the Ambonese society. For instance, I share the same perception of danger as the people I interviewed, which helped me understand their perspectives related to dangerous and safe situations. However, this feeling of "sameness" also caused problems of objectivity, especially when the respondents shared personal and emotional stories as it was difficult to re-construct such sensitive data related to the conflicts. I have previously discussed Chavez's (2008) methodological challenges in studying her own family. She, too, underlined the need for further discussions on the advantages and disadvantages of endo-ethnographic approaches in order to better prepare insider researchers for conducting studies in familiar settings. However, many of the insider scholars do not engage in the discourse around the positionality issue. The scholars tend to follow and apply the pre-established methods, subsequently only focusing on the challenges commonly faced by outsider scholars. We, the local researchers, tend to not realize that we are not picking the right battle.

On the other hand, tackling methodological challenges faced by insider researchers may often be completely off the table. In his book on the interreligious violence and reconciliation in the Moluccas region, Qurtuby (2016) emphasized the general challenges he faced in accessing that particular risky setting. There were at least two aspects linked to the methodology that were not clearly discussed in relation to his position as a local Indonesian scholar. First, to gain access to the field, he made use of one of the key figures of the Java-based armed Islamic paramilitary group that fought in the Ambon conflicts to contact one of the leaders. While he did explore the challenges he faced, he did not discuss the advantages

of his physical and identity markers, such as being a male Muslim Javanese, nor the disadvantageous impact of such similarities on the findings. Second, borrowing Chavez's (2008) classification of linguistics, it is quite common for insiders to take the linguistic proficiency of the locals—in most cases, their native language—for granted. In his book, it was not clear how his proficiency in the Indonesian language and Javanese affected the interview or the data analysis. Therefore, the following question arises: If he had not been fluent in those languages, would his findings have differed significantly?

Considering the global debate on the need to use international relations to understand the subjectivity on the ground while also allowing anthropology to have a "more direct critical agency" (Richmond, 2018, p. 224), I propose that researchers should further discuss the ethnography of peace and not the anthropology of peace as suggested by Braeuchler (2015). One of the common critiques of Braeuchler's book is that it lacks subjectivity, whereas her main argument is to study peace from an anthropological perspective. I argue that studying peace in a society requires the use of interdisciplinary lenses. While confining the studies to one discipline provides a more specific focus, it fails to address the complex problems faced by the conflict-prone society. Furthermore, the disciplinary backgrounds of peace builders tend to be varied. Therefore, I propose adjusting the methodology—in this case, the ethnographic strategies—to address these problems rather than re-orienting the knowledge about peace based on a single discipline. This would enable the construction of balanced ethnographic strategies to ensure that both the outsider and local researchers are better equipped to study peacebuilding processes in conflict-related areas.

Unlike other qualitative research settings, conflict-prone areas are sensitive. Therefore, the regular ethnographic strategies would

not be sufficient to capture the interplay between the emic and etic perceptions of peace and conflict. For example, outsider readers of Krause's book (2018) may not focus on the descriptions provided or the interpretative methods used to reconstruct the information, but insiders who have visited or live in Ambon would likely question the claims she has made. Second, on language proficiency, it was not clear either for outsider scholars who claimed to conduct the interview in local language without clearly outlining how proficient he/she was in the language in question. This is important to note, especially if the data is analyzed on the basis of interview transcripts, as it would cause readers to question the validity and reliability of the data gathered. In the methodology chapter of her book, Krause (2018) mentioned, "during my time in Yogyakarta, I completed an Indonesian language course" (p. 83) and claimed to have conducted most of the interviews related to sensitive topics in the Indonesian language. As a comparison, I spent half a year of my fieldwork period trying to mimic the particular accents of each community (Christian and Muslim) to access valuable information that was sometimes hidden within silence and or implied by the participant's choice of words, regardless I share the same Indonesian language with the Ambonese.

Language is a struggle for both sides, and how such differences affect the collected data and its interpretations remains an issue that seems to be too delicate to discuss. Since language is a key element of successful research, I argue that revealing the language limitations faced during a study could lead to the validity of the entire data being questioned. Since there is no clear-cut discussion on the language proficiency required to conduct qualitative research, especially using ethnographic strategies, evaluating the interpretations of the collected data is problematic. Third, the knowledge of practical and historical contexts that insider scholars have been aware of throughout the course of their lives are sometimes overwritten by

insider scholars who try to *make familiar things unfamiliar*. But why do they do so? Why can't the intertextuality of the past and current contexts of the field, acquired by the insiders through the course of their lives, be held accountable as it is? Aren't insiders tired of knowing the reality of the situation but having to refer to and cite outsiders who have first extracted the local knowledge and thus claimed it?

A wider problem with mushrooming research interest within a particular society is the coming of researchers and NGO workers to the research area. Reflecting on the situation in Ambon, I found that the respondents were, at first, reluctant to talk about their conflict-related experiences. Later, I understood that it was because of two reasons. First, of course, they did not want to reopen the wound and were of the mentality that what happened in the past should stay in the past. Second, in Ambon particularly, numerous studies have been conducted by researchers from diverse nationalities on a wide range of topics related to the conflicts, from various disciplinary angles. The coming of these researchers and the unidentified number of NGOs and government-led peace projects in the area resulted in the local people having no choice but to reproduce the same narratives over and over again. I observed that many of the academic studies on Ambon tend to advocate a common interest, which is to expand knowledge for *others* so that further studies can be conducted, but little of the produced knowledge considers the interests and needs of the community studied or provides answers that would be useful for the society.

There is a tendency among researchers to resume and summarize what the locals already know, aiming to fill in a gap in the global literature but inadequately addressing the problems faced by their own respondents. Using three examples of recent studies on the Ambon and Maluku conflicts (Braeuchler, 2015; Krause, 2018; Qurtuby, 2016), I argue that the presented findings are already

known by most of the people in the area. In their methodology, these researchers discussed that most of the respondents tended to provide normative and uniform answers to questions related to the conflicts. One of my respondents once joked about how he prepared a set of templated answers for interviews by researchers studying the conflicts in Ambon. However, I should admit that focusing on the needs and expectations of the people under study may affect the reliability and validity of the research. I believe that it is the researchers' responsibility to find a middle ground between the need to fill the gap in global literature and the exchange of accessible and useful knowledge with the community they are indebted to. Especially when working with people in areas affected by conflicts, I believe that an understanding of ethics should be prioritized during the research. The respondents agree to convey their vulnerabilities, painful past experiences, and traumatic stories to the researchers; therefore, is it too much to ask for researchers to find research questions that would make the efforts of these people worthwhile?

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